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Arthur O'Connor

No 303

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STATE
OF
IRELAND.

BY
ARTHUR O'CONNOR,

1797.

Printed by A. Wilson.

THOSE WHO WERE ELIGIBLE

STATE

OF

COUNTY OF ANTIM

IR E L A N D

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THE year which
ARTHUR O'CONNOR
most useful for the present, but the most
of the year which
is our most useful history. It is twelve months
since I promised to give you a date of my
country. But I have been the trustee of
which I have been the trustee of
which I have been the trustee of

*privately printed and
privately circulated*

**TO
THOSE WHO WERE ELECTORS**

**OF THE
COUNTY OF ANTRIM.**

FELLOW-CITIZENS,

THE year which has intervened since I last addressed you, has been filled with events the most trying for the present, and the most auspicious for the future, that have ever occurred in our mournful history. It is twelve months since I promised to give you a State of our Country; but such has been the tyranny under which Persecution has laboured to destroy the freedom of discussion, that, until within these
few

few days, it has not been in my power to perform my promise. It was my intention to have addressed it to you as the only independent part of the then Constituent Body ; but since the present Ministers and their Accomplices have destroyed every vestige of Election by Martial Law, and by imprisoning your Candidate upon false pretences, on the eve of a general election—abandoning all idea of considering you as a part of what no longer exists, I have addressed the State of our Country to you in common with the rest of my Countrymen united in the glorious cause of regaining their Freedom. They who expect to find a detail of the horrors of which Ireland has been the theatre, will be disappointed ; those have been already written in the blood of our Countrymen ; your sufferings have flowed from the System : I have therefore mounted to the source, and detailed the System itself. Convinced that such a System should not, nor cannot be longer continued ; convinced that

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Murderers must capitulate, and lay down their arms at the feet of the Nation they have outraged, I have hastened to give a State of our Country, that Irishmen might be furnished with an account of those WRONGS they have to redress, and of those RIGHTS they have to regain, before their Liberties can be secured.

I have given you this Statement with all its imperfections on its head, rather than wait to abridge its redundances, or to correct the numerous faults with which it abounds. If I have shewn you the TRUTH, it is of trivial consideration in what garb I have dressed her; the crisis is too momentous, her presence too necessary, her charms too lovely, to need decoration. The inviolable fidelity with which my beloved Countrymen have kept their engagements one to the other, and that spirit which has risen in proportion as dangers and difficulties have multiplied, augur that Liberty
will

will exalt the fame of Irishmen as high in the future history of nations, as rapine and tyranny have depressed it in the centuries that have passed. What I have said has flowed warm from a heart unsubdued by persecution; and my utmost wish will be accomplished if it finds as warm a reception in the unbroken hearts of my United Countrymen.

ARTHUR O'CONNOR.

FEBRUARY 1, 1798.

ERRATA.

- Page 44, line 24, For *public*, read *people*.
— 46, — 6, For *Butler*, read *Boulter*.
— 47, — 27, For *our*, read *over*.
— 62, — 17, For *countrymen*, read *countrywomen*.
— 65, — 8, For *on*, read *in*.
— 94, — 15, For *wreathed*, read *writhed*.
— 119, — 25, For *sixteen*, read *fifteen*.
— 141, — 9, For *twenty thousand too*, read *twenty-two thousand*.
— 145, — 17, For *bonds*, read *bounds*.
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ERRATA

Page 44	line 24	For "pale" read "pale".
45	— 6	For "pale" read "pale".
47	— 27	For "pale" read "pale".
62	— 17	For "pale" read "pale".
65	— 8	For "pale" read "pale".
94	— 15	For "pale" read "pale".
112	— 25	For "pale" read "pale".
141	— 2	For "pale" read "pale".
145	— 17	For "pale" read "pale".

TO
THE IRISH NATION.

FELLOW-CITIZENS,

THAT I should attempt to inquire into the state of our Country in its present woeful condition, does not arise from any overweening conceit that I possess abilities adequate to so arduous a task. It would argue a total ignorance of the extent and intricacy of the system which has caused the poverty of Ireland—it would argue a total ignorance how much this system was interwoven, not only with the fortunes of the herd of little gentry, but with the fortunes and consequence of the most powerful families amongst us,—were I not sensible of my inability to do the subject that justice its importance deserves. But, although I am not gifted with that commanding eloquence which can fortify irresolute virtue, and appal the daring effrontery of inveterate guilt, I trust you shall not find me wanting in perseverance to trace the misery and sufferings of my Country

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to their real source, nor in resolution to brave the persecution and calumny of DETESTED CRIMINALS.

Hitherto, the state of *faction* has been so mistaken for the state of the *country*, that, as often as the public mind has been led to hope that an inquiry would be made into the state of the nation, it has always ended in recitals of the contests of the different factions under the different administrations, with reciprocal animadversions and eulogiums on those by whom they have been supported, and on those by whom they have been opposed—by which reiterated disgraceful recriminations the People of Ireland have at length learnt with what undeviating uniformity their dearest interests have been sold. Detesting faction, detesting the entire principles on which Irish administration is formed, I am free to investigate the purposes for which the public money, or, as it is called, the Patronage of Ireland, has been distributed by the agent of a British Minister, and the services for which it has been received by an Irish Legislature. I avow myself openly the implacable enemy of the whole system under which Venality, Corruption and Tyranny, have dared to trample on the Liberties of my Country, where emoluments are peculation, and what are called honours a disgrace. Appearances are so strong against this system—they carry with them such evident marks that the foulest treason has been practised against
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the People of Ireland—that, were I to content myself with the mention of general abstract facts, I know not how the most shameless prostitution could deny the necessity of instantaneous reformation. If internal tranquillity, and a willing obedience to the laws, be the best criterion to judge of the justice or wisdom with which they have been made, or of the moderation with which they have been administered, in what period of our history, in what quarter of our country, shall the Government and Legislature of Ireland find their justification? If the condition of a people be the best criterion to judge of the excellence of their practical government, how shall the People of Ireland, worse housed, worse clad, and worse fed, than the subjects of the most inveterate despotism in Europe, divest themselves from thinking that they live under one of the worst practical governments in the world? If the respect in which a nation is held abroad be the best criterion to judge of the ability or integrity with which its affairs have been conducted at home, how shall the People of Ireland, without rank, or without a name among nations, force themselves to believe that their affairs have been conducted with either ability or integrity? Is it by comparing the rank which this beauteous island holds with the rank held by the swamps of Holland, the mountains of Switzerland, the diminutiveness of Geneva or

Genoa, or the sterility of Portugal, suffering under the double lash of civil and religious despotism, that the People of Ireland should be satisfied with the fidelity of their Government, or with the purity of their Representatives? Shall beggary and famine stalk through your country, so blest with a temperate climate and a fertile soil, without the strongest suspicion that the people have not been done justice? Shall a brave, healthy, intelligent, generous people, be doomed to the most squalid misery at home, and be famed for enterprise, activity and industry in every country but their own, without the strongest suspicion that they have been made a prey to speculation, injustice, and oppression? Shall a country be endowed by Providence with the advantages of coasting carriage, of navigable rivers, and with the most convenient form, and yet its industry be at so low an ebb, that the principal manufactures for home consumption shall be furnished by a neighbouring nation, without the strongest suspicion that her industry has been sold? Shall a country be gifted by the hand of Nature with the advantages of insular situation—be indented with numerous safe and commodious harbours, and be most advantageously placed on the globe between the old and the new world—and yet possess such an inconsiderable foreign trade, as that no ships scarcely, but those of one nation, shall enter her ports, and
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those the ships of that nation which appoints her government and distributes her patronage—without the strongest suspicion of perfidy in her government, and treason in her legislature?

The contrast between the condition of our country and the natural advantages with which it has been gifted, forms a paradox which calls aloud for inquiry. I will not waste time in proving that we are immersed in a state of poverty, and wretchedness which ill accords with the natural advantages of our country. He must be blind who does not see it; he must be deaf who has not heard our complaints; and there are none but those who have been sharers in the plunder that have not felt for our distress. I know there are traitors amongst us, who say that our misery is caused by our indolence, and that idleness is an innate vice in the People of Ireland. If so, why do they come from the most remote quarters of the country to the vicinage of the towns, to seek for employment? Why do they leave their habitations, their families and their country, in such numbers, every year, to seek for employment in England and in Newfoundland? If idleness be an innate vice in us and in our soil, how has it happened that we have surpassed the People of England in the only manufacture in which our industry has been done justice? Or, if we are this indolent people, why was it necessary for a Legislature of Ireland to write its own indelible infamy in the black character

rafter of that law by which it destroyed the wool-
len manufacture in Ireland in order to promote it
in Great-Britain? But these are the calumnies of
men enriched by emoluments which their prosti-
tution, not their abilities, has gathered—of men
who are bribed to betray the people they vilify—
of men who seek to lay the effects of their own
treason at the door of the nation they have sold,
oppressed, and ruined. It is time to unmask them,
and to prove to the world, that the want of in-
dustry so foully charged on the People of Ireland
originates in the plunder and poverty of their
country, and that this plunder and poverty origi-
nate in a system of Corruption and Usurpation
which those who have destroyed every vestige of
our Liberties call glorious and happy.

*Of the sacred Funds which pay the Wages of
Industry.*

INDUSTRY is the source of human prosperity,
and the wages of industry are its excitement. In
every civilized country, the wealth gathered by
industry forms a fund for the employment of the
industrious; and as the existence of this fund is
the great discriminating mark between civilization
and barbarism, so the state of this fund is what
regulates the condition and character of every
people upon earth. If the Government and Le-
gislation protect the People in their industry and
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in their national rights, this fund will answer the population: It will grow with a growing population, and population will be a blessing: Industry will flourish; and, with it, plenty, honesty, sobriety, cleanliness and the rest of her delightful companions, will follow in her train. These are the effects of good Government; these are the fruits of Liberty; these are the blessings which the Almighty showers down upon a people who have the spirit to assert their rights, and the courage to maintain them, against Governments which exist but by the means they have of corrupting, and against Legislators who live but on the wages they receive for betraying, the People they pretend to represent. But when the funds for the employment of industry have been squandered---when the Government and Legislature, by treason and plunder, have perverted this fund from answering the population, or from growing so as to answer a growing population, population becomes a curse: Idleness must predominate; and, with it, poverty, dishonesty, drunkenness, filth and the rest of her horrid crew, must be the inevitable consequence. These are the unerring marks of an enslaved Nation: These are the evils which visit a people cursed with a foreign Government and a venal Legislature: These are the calamities which afflict a people, the fund for the employment of whose industry has been drained, to
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swell the funds for the employment of that nation which appoints their government and distributes their patronage. It is the proportion which this fund bears to the population that stamps the character of indolence, or of industry, on every people on the globe: It is this proportion which regulates the happiness, or misery, of every nation upon earth. If, then, this sacred fund has been squandered by the Government and Legislature of Ireland---if every means by which Irish industry could acquire Irish capital has been sacrificed, to swell the funds, and to promote the industry, of Great Britain, I do not hesitate to assert, that the Government and Legislators of Ireland have been the most prostitute Hirelings, that they have committed the foulest Treason against the People of Ireland, that ever Government or Legislature committed against a People. But, that you may judge of the fidelity with which your Government and Legislature have protected and husbanded this sacred fund, we must examine how far the sources from which it could be supplied, have been applied to their proper use.

THE FIRST SOURCE.

The first, the most permanent and the most abundant source for supplying the fund for the employment of national industry, is the produce of Agriculture. Does the produce of the lands of Ireland go to supply the fund for the employment

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ment of its People? No! your corn, your cattle, your butter, your leather, your yarn, all your superfluous produce, and much more than would be superfluous if the People of Ireland were furnished with the common necessaries of life, are all exported without a return to pay the rents of Irish Landlords who do not think the country worthy of their residence, every particle of which is as utterly lost to the fund for the employment of the People of Ireland as if it had been thrown into the sea. The whole is exported, to swell the funds for the employment of the People of England; whilst the forsaken, plundered People of Ireland are left to languish in famine and misery, for want of that wealth, in the shape of wages, which the labour of their hands, and the sweat of their brow, had originally produced—exhaling the sap and moisture of the Irish soil to fertilize Great-Britain. I ask, if this country were to wage an endless war, which should be defrayed by the annual exportation of two millions' worth of her rude unmanufactured produce, how could the fund for the employment of her industry be more impoverished than it is by this exportation of her agricultural produce without a return? If the Almighty were to afflict this country with barrenness and blighting to such a degree, that her annual produce should be two millions' worth less than it is at present—or, if the Almighty were to send such inclement seasons, that the two millions' worth of her rude

produce were to be destroyed—in what respect could the fund for the employment of the People of Ireland be more injured than it is at present? If this country was annually ravaged by the most barbarous enemy; nay, if we were a conquered people—could the most oppressive tyrants have exacted a more severe tribute, or could the payment be enforced in a manner more injurious to the industry of Ireland, than by rejecting their manufactured produce, and obliging them to pay it in the rude unmanufactured state? Creative as this evil has been of the misery and wretchedness of the People of Ireland—destructive as it has proved to their industry—I ask, why have the Government and Legislature of Ireland resisted every attempt to correct or to prevent it? Although the property of the non-resident, and the resident, are equally protected by the Irish government, yet so wholly has the property of the non-residents been exempted from contributing towards its support, that the beggar who consumes one penny-worth of tobacco in the course of the year contributes more towards the maintenance of Irish government than all the non-resident landlords put together. Give me one instance in the history of nations, in which the interest and industry of a people calling themselves free has been so wholly sacrificed to the accomodation of a few individuals. Give me one instance in the annals of the world, where the most sacred rights of a nation calling itself independent

pendent has been so treacherously abandoned to aggrandize another people.

THE SECOND SOURCE.

The next source from which the fund for the employment of national industry can be supplied, is the profits of the national capital employed in Commerce. For a nation to be commercial, she must be free. It is the exclusive privilege, it is the most glorious attribute, of transcendant Liberty, that she protects her votaries in the freest exercise of their industry, and in the fullest enjoyment of its produce. Commerce must be free from embarrassment, from injustice, and from oppression. How, then, shall a country, subject to such a code as the Revenue Laws of Ireland, become commercial? How shall commerce, which shrinks from embarrassment, and flies from injustice and oppression, take up its residence in a country where its most important branches are made to bend under the weight of the fees and exactions of the Officers of Revenue? How shall commerce take up its residence in a country where the laws which regulate trade are calculated to make the independence of the mercantile body crouch to Revenue Clerks, at once Legislators and Commissioners, at once makers and expounders of the Laws? How shall commerce take up her abode where the Laws are made to sap the inde-

pendence of a county, or to colonize a borough, with the instruments of venality, extortion and pillage? Speculation is the soul of commerce; and an extensive market is the life of speculation. How, then, shall Ireland become commercial, where the Legislature has thrown open every market in Ireland to every species of British manufacture, whilst every market in Great Britain is shut against every species of Irish manufacture, with one solitary exception, which, after every effort, British industry could not compass? Your Legislature has not only sacrificed your home trade to the most commercial nation in the world, but, by giving this powerful nation an unbounded right to fill your markets with the produce of her own and of every other nation, while a reciprocal right of sending foreign produce to her markets is strictly denied you, your foreign trade undergoes the fate of your home trade. Yes! your own Legislature has laid your home trade, they have laid your foreign trade, at the feet of British aggrandizement; and they have procured your exclusion in return. Does this look as if the Legislature of either country represented Ireland? Does not this look as if both represented Great Britain? If this be Irish legislation, what man who loves his country durst dispute the virtue of your Senate? If this be British fraternity, what Irishman so ungrateful

grateful that will not fall with Britain, and think his blood well shed for such a benefactor?

THE THIRD SOURCE.

The next source from which the fund for the employment of national industry can be supplied, is the profits of the national capital employed in Manufactures. For a People to become manufacturers, they should have materials to work on, and provisions to maintain them whilst they are at work. How shall the People of Ireland become a manufacturing nation, whose materials and provisions are annually exported without any return? Robbed of their home market, robbed of the foreign market for the surplufage of their work after the home market is supplied, where are they to dispose of their manufactures, even though they were not robbed of their materials and provisions without a return? Your home market is narrowed by an inundation of every species of British manufacture, whilst every market in Great Britain is closed against every species of Irish manufacture, with the solitary exception of your linen. Your industry is robbed of its native food, chained down on its native soil. Thus famished, manacled, and in infancy, it is thrown a prey to the monster of mercantile avarice, whose insatiable appetite has plundered and devoured the mild inhabitants of the East Indies—reduced the human species to the state of the brute creation in the West Indies—would have subjugated the brave Americans---and, after deluging

deluging all Europe with blood, making it a prey to famine and civil discord, has expended its treasures to instigate exhausted combatants to a farther continuance of a war, and of a carnage, the most destructive and bloody that has been ever recorded in the annals of the world.

FOURTH SOURCE.

The next source from which the fund for the employment of your national industry could be supplied, is your Fisheries. What a source of wealth and industry would they have proved to a well-governed nation, blessed with the natural advantages with which Ireland has been gifted! Yet how has this treasure been destroyed by that Law intituled "An Act for the encouragement of the Fisheries of Ireland!" - an Act in which you will see as much human presumption as ever yet appeared in human legislation.

The Revenue Code had established the *omnipotence* of its commissioners; this law establishes their *omniscience*. It says, that three of them shall annually inform the fishermen of Ireland of the exact spot where the fish are to be found. It not only directs where they shall fish, but it directs, in the most precise manner, how they shall fish, and how they shall be equipped; and, if the illiterate fishermen of Ireland do not take, and comply with the contents of, eleven long oaths set forth in this law, although they should catch all the fish in the sea, they

they cannot catch one shilling of bounty. To follow this law through all its absurdities, would be to recite every letter of the Act. Legislators, who, from their situation in life, could not have the skill or knowledge of the meanest fisherman on the coast, have prescribed the exact manner in which a whole people, under all the variations of time, situation and circumstances, shall exercise their industry in one of its most important branches. It is not only that vast sums of the public money of an impoverished country have been squandered, but, that they should be expended for the purpose of destroying one of the most valuable sources of national industry—and this, after a similar attempt had been made in Great Britain, and failed, although a much greater capital had been subscribed, and a much higher bounty had been given. O ill-fated Country! where the crime of wasting the public money merges into insignificance, compared with the mischief its expenditure creates! There is a history in every Irish job. This job having ruined the jobber, has not rendered it less injurious to our national industry. But as the proprietor is dead, as the job has not answered, this great branch of your industry may revive, when relieved from the contagion of Parliamentary bounty.

FIFTH SOURCE.

The only remaining source from which the fund for the employment of national industry could be augmented,

augmented, is the savings made from the Wages of the Industrious. But when beggary, misery, and famine, present themselves at every quarter of our country, expiring witnesses of the robbery and plunder of this sacred fund, how can I insult you by talking of savings from wages, in a country where the nation has been converted into an almshouse, and the industrious into beggars? If there be a country upon earth where the accursed trade of Corruption, Prostitution and Treason, has been set up, to destroy the fair and honest occupations of commerce and industry—where men are accounted great in proportion to the extent of the trade they drive in buying and selling the rights and interests of their country—where public money, extorted from wretchedness, is the capital they trade with, and public welfare the commodity they deal in—where a degraded and debased gentry, in one continued chain of mercenary dependence, have been bred up to the trade—where agriculture is drained to the dregs, where manufactures are strangled in their cradle—How, in the name of Heaven, in such a country, is the fund for the employment of national industry to derive any succour from a capital thus mutilated, jobbed and plundered?

I have now enumerated every means by which national industry can acquire national capital. I have shewn you how far these means of acquiring wealth

wealth have been wrested from you, my Countrymen ! and transferred to aggrandize Great Britain ; yet this were to recount but half your wrongs. It is not enough that you should know the manner by which you have been deprived of the means of acquiring wealth : You should, also, be informed of the various ways by which the pittance of wealth your industry has acquired, under its mutilated means, has been robbed and plundered under a system of Corruption and Treason, to the beggary of the Irish, and the ruin of their country.

The Ways by which the Capital the Nation has acquired, is drained.

THE first deduction I shall state, is the enormous drain which is extorted from industry, under the head of Religious Instruction. Whilst the clergy for instructing three millions of Catholics receive but 60,000*l.* annually, and the clergy for instructing six hundred thousand Presbyterians receive but 25,000*l.*—the clergy for instructing four hundred thousand Parliamentary Protestants are maintained at the enormous annual expence of half a million. When I contemplate the various attributes of that mighty Power which has created and moves the myriads of worlds I see floating round me—when, as an inhabitant of this globe, which the same Power has created and animated,

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I attempt, from the contemplation of his works, to collect the numerous laws by which he ordained his creatures should be directed and governed—when I consider the difficulty of knowing which to admit, and which to reject, of those writings, which, in so many ages, and in so many nations, have been received and accredited as coming from God, for the rule and direction of Man---when I consider how many various interpretations the mind of Man has given to those scriptures, received and accredited among Christians, written in trope, in metaphor, in figure, in parable, and in allegory---I cannot conceive how any two thinking men (and I hold those who think not for themselves, but leave it to others to think for them, of no account) could form the same opinion on such an extensive and difficult subject. Can the human mind conceive a greater absurdity than that one man should direct what another should believe? What point of contact exists between man and man, on this great and difficult subject of faith and belief? What possible right can one man set up, to interfere with the faith or belief of another? What standard have those who do not agree, by which they can settle their difference? or, without such a standard, how can the controversy be ever decided? These considerations, and a thousand others, with imperious mandate, consecrate the
right

right of the individual in his religious opinions against the whole world beside. It is a concern between him and his God. Tyrant, avaunt! Opinion is too subtle for your grasp. You may force it to hypocrisy and dissimulation; but to Man, and his Creator only, can it be known. If, then, the right of the individual stands good against the rest of mankind, what can be more presumptuous, or unjust, than that a minority should set up a right to controul the majority? If a whole nation has no right to interfere with the most insignificant citizen in his religious opinions, so as to do him the smallest injustice for the freest exercise of this imprescriptible right, by what title does one class of Irish Protestants, not one tenth of the nation, arrogate the power of appropriating such exorbitant funds for the ministers of its religion, to which the other nine tenths are not only made to contribute, but to pay for their own religious instruction besides? But what will be the indignation, not only of the majority, whose interest is sacrificed, but also of these Parliamentary protestants, if I shall prove, that this flagrant violation of imprescriptible right is not less injurious to the religion it was done under the pretence of promoting, than it is oppressive to those against whom it acts with such destructive injustice?

Man, when he becomes the minister of religion, does not lay aside the passions, the desires or the propensities of his nature; the strongest

and most uniform of which, is a constant desire to better his condition. Hence the minister, who is appointed to an annual income in contempt of the approbation or choice of his parishioners, and receives it independent of the zeal or the diligence with which he discharges its duties, has no excitement to call forth his exertions. The most attentive discharge of his ministry adds nothing to his annual income, if he were ever so well read in the doctrines it is his duty to teach. If he were to recommend himself to his parishioners by the most exemplary life and the most unwearied attendance, they have it not in their power to better his fortune. Hence, if his exertions be directed to this further advancement---and, as long as human nature continues, you will not find one in a thousand with whom it is not the paramount object---the minister, under such an establishment, will relinquish the barren, unprofitable occupation of religious instruction, to devote his time and his exertions to gain those by whose means and whose interest he may be further promoted. He will devote himself, with the most servile obeisance, to the wishes and will of his Bishop, or to the government, however corrupt, which can advance him to the highest state of affluence, of patronage, and of political power, rather than to the discharge of his parochial duties. The larger his stipend, the greater his temptation, and his means, to desert his parishioners.

rishioners. After wealth, patronage, and power, have been set in his way, it is vain to expect that he will not desert those of inferior condition who stand most in need of his constant attendance, that he may join those in that sphere with whom this monstrous establishment ranks him, with whom it is his inclination, as well as his interest, to mix. Not only his own inclination draws him away from his duty; but the vanity and love of pleasure, so natural to the rest of his family, are ill satisfied with displaying the equipage and finery, their great income allows them to purchase, before their Gothic parishioners, which might be exhibited with such eclat in Dublin, in London, or in Bath, or at the Hot-wells of Bristol. If the enormity of the establishment of the present Protestant Clergy takes away every incitement to an active discharge of their duty, the inequality of the preferment is not less fatal. Instead of sitting down for life amongst his parishioners, to study their dispositions, their weaknesses, or their vices, without which it is impossible he should be able to correct or amend them, under the present inequality of Church preferment, the Protestant minister must regard every instant he remains in his actual condition, as the loss of his fortune; and, from the instant he obtains one preferment, his thoughts are employed in devising means for attaining another. If the poor and the uneducated stand most in need

of

of religious instruction, are they not most likely to receive it from a clergy, whose stipends place them in a state above that meanness which too often attends upon want, but below that affluence which creates arrogance, and contempt of inferiors? If the furtherance of religion be their object, should not its clergy be placed in that situation, where it will be their interest to cultivate the good opinion and good will of the poorest parishioners? Should not the clergy be placed in such a situation as would oblige them to build their character and consequence in the world on the most exemplary life, and the most active and faithful discharge of their sacred functions? Why, then, have they been placed in a situation, where the mode by which they are paid has been the source of endless litigation and enmity between them and the people? Why has their preferment been made to rest on the forfeiture of their independence, and the most abject sacrifice of their duties as citizens, at the shrine of corruption? Why has the mode by which they are paid been made to act as a bounty on idleness, by falling heaviest on those who are most industrious, and lightest on those who are least so? If the Founder of Christianity were to descend upon earth, with what indignation would he behold the heads of his ministry invested with wealth, with patronage and political power! With what indignation would he behold the cringing, the meanness and the servility of the subaltern clergy

clergy towards these superiors—to see his mild, disinterested religion coupled with political faction—to see worldly preferment their only pursuit, and the sacrifice of independence, public virtue and honour, the only means of attainment—to see the most lofty ambition, the most selfish avidity, and the most persecuting spirit of tyrannic ascendancy, concealed under the colour of sanctity and the garb of hypocrisy! Well might he ask what part of his sacred writings authorised his ministers to rank themselves at the head of the opulent lords and most puissant princes of human creation—instead of that self-denial, that humility, that meekness, that contempt of riches and honours, which he preached in every line of his gospel!

If those of what are called the learned professions, physicians and lawyers, were paid regular annual stipends, like these protestant clergy, independent of any exertions they made to deserve them, in vain would you look for the present competition, and unwearied attention to patients and clients. No longer would physicians retain that spirit of independence for which they are so deservedly noted. No longer would an apostate Minister have to dread, that an attempt to punish with death those principles which had raised him to the zenith of power, would be baffled by incorruptible honour, transcendant genius, and unwearied exertion. Genius, independence, honour, exertion, and patriotism—all, all would be engulfed in the abyss of corruption.

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Is it upon divine authority that sects of Christian ministers are linked to Governments by these monstrous establishments? On the contrary, Christ has denounced it. After Christianity having made its way amongst nations, not only without the aid or adoption of governments, but under their most severe persecution, how can it be said that now, when it has been so deeply rooted in the habits, the education and prejudices of the people, it should stand in need of such a connection? Look to its history: Have not its ministers, in every instance in which they have been linked to government by wealth, patronage and power, filled the world with torrents of blood, and mountains of carnage? Have they not instituted the most horrid tortures, and the most dreadful persecution? Have they not been the most formidable tyrants that ever conspired against the progress of knowledge? Have they not been the most constant abettors of despotism, and the vilest tools of corruption? Take Ireland as an example---Are the ministers of the * Presbyterian and Catholic Religion, who are independent of the Irish Government, on their moderate stipends, less zealous, less diligent, less resident, less beloved or revered, than those with this enormous endowment? Contrast these unpatronized ministers with the government clergy—See the former resting in peace, because

* Fortunately, the connexion between the Presbyterian Clergy and the Irish Government is inconsiderable.

cause they rest on the affection of their parishioners: See the latter, in every quarter, seeking the aid, not only of the civil power, not only of the most sanguinary laws, but the still more unnatural aid of military execution. Set not up this fatal connexion, this destructive establishment, as the friend of religion, which it betrays: Set it not up on divine authority, which has denounced it: Set it not up as the creator of the peace, the happiness, the science, or the liberties of mankind, which it destroys: But hold it up to public view, as the ally of despotic power, the champion of ignorance, and the hireling of prostitution. What has this monstrous establishment in Ireland of the benevolence, the humility, the disinterestedness or the mildness of the Christian religion? Set it down, what it is, the tool, the accomplice, the creature of Irish administration, Irish prostitution, Irish corruption. This is its true destination: here you behold its ministers militant magistrates, hurrying the people to the dungeons, the gallies or the gallows; or merciless extortioners of exorbitant stipends, wrung from heart-sick misery and despondent poverty. Follow them to the courts of law—you will see them attended by sheriffs, by bailiffs, by perjurers, by spies and informers, by tythe-proctors, process-servers, and civil bill attorneys; and after they have tutored the witnesses, and modelled the juries, behold with what keenness they hunt down their prey! Heavens! what

an office for a minister of the Christian religion! How shall I withhold my indignation, when I behold a Christian minister, who has persecuted his fellow-creatures to death, on some clause of those sanguinary laws made at his instance, and for his use, accompany his victim to the place of execution, under the mockery of affording him a last consolation! How figure to my mind a minister of religion, hurried on to prosecution by the thirst of power and wealth, enlarging on the virtue of forgiveness and charity, and the merits of poverty in the eyes of a Christian Redeemer! How endure to hear this relentless persecutor dwell on the mercies of Christ who has himself shewn no mercy whatever, or, with unparalleled effrontery, remunerating the miserable sufferer for the painful death his malice has dealt him, by the most liberal assurances of life and happiness in an eternal hereafter!

THE SECOND DEDUCTION.

The next deduction I shall state, which is made from your slender acquirements, is the expence at which the laws are administered. When you consider the number of lawyers, attorneys and clerks, which swarm about us, maintained at such enormous expence, the exorbitant fees of the offices, the numerous law offices, and the barefaced creation of more---you must be sensible how enormous a drain the administration of law must occasion from

from your national capital. To comprehend this aright, we must look to the origin of our laws. We must look to those barbarous times when a few despots were the sole proprietors, and the mass of the people belonged to the soil, like the herds they attended. We must look to those laws of primogeniture, entails and settlements, which have been set up to secure and perpetuate the despotism of the few, and to ensure and perpetuate the exclusion and slavery of the many. We must examine how these despotic laws of a barbarous age have been strained, wrenched and twisted, by fiction, form and quibble, to answer a commercial and civilized age. Instead of a clear, digested and uniform code ; customs, traditions, precedents, laws, written and unwritten, heaped together, have been consecrated ; and their contradictions and confusion have been celebrated as a *glorious uncertainty* by the professors. No wonder, that, in this barbarous mass of complexity, chicane, and fraud, it were vain for those who seek justice to consult the professors to tell them the law. No wonder, that precedents equally strong should be found on one side as well as on the other. The whole is enveloped in form and fiction ; and, in the slightest omission of either, substantial justice is lost. Trial after trial may be had in the same cause ; and whilst innumerable forms enable the

agents to increase the expences, and to prolong the duration, it is their interest to extend both as far as they can. In vain shall the upright Judge hold the balance of justice with equal hand, if it is placed scarcely within the attainment of the rich, and out of the reach of the poor. It cannot be justice, unless it is common; it cannot be common, unless it is cheap.

As the exertions of judges, of lawyers, of attorneys, and the whole tribe who live by the trade, as well as the ministers for religious instruction, are all unproductive---as the whole labour of the entire professors of religion and law, would not maintain the most humble individual amongst them, for a day, in one single necessary or convenience of life—as they are wholly maintained from the produce of national industry, to which they in no way contribute,—it may be imagined, that, as population, and the difficulties of the industrious to provide the means of existence, increased, imperious necessity would instigate your Legislature and Government to moderate the expences of Religion and Law. But when the privileged and the rich have taken up the idea, that the government which can buy up the reason of mankind is the only government which Man can endure---when œconomy or retrenchment is regarded as the weakness of government, and waste and extravagance as its strength---no wonder reformation should

should be scouted as fraught with ruin. True to this ridiculous and destructive notion, your Legislature and Government have been increasing the funds of Corruption, even to National Bankruptcy, when, with an empty Exchequer, they have created two-and-thirty mongrel Judges, gleaned from the refuse of those numerous blanks which the lottery of law turns up every hour. How shall we hope that a government, where the gentry are its only allies, will retrench the expences of those burdensome corporations, in which there is not what is called a Gentleman's family which has not one or more numbers? How shall we expect, that, by cleansing such Augean filth, that vast portion of ability and unwearied exertion, which is at present employed in briefing, in pleading and in judging the most absurd and frivolous quibbles, to the ruin and beggary of both loser and gainer, will be turned to useful occupations, in which it would increase the necessaries, the conveniences and comforts of life?

THE THIRD DEDUCTION.

The next deduction I shall mention, which is made from your national capital, is the expence of Education. The funds for defraying this charge are very considerable in large tracts of lands, partly public grants, and partly private donations, together with a portion of the tythes, which the established clergy do not, but which by law they are obliged to

to contribute ; amounting altogether to a fund fully adequate to defray the expences of the most complete system of education that could be adopted. But what will be your indignation on being informed, that this sacred fund has been embezzled by this already exorbitantly endowed protestant clergy ?

Some years ago, a Committee* was appointed to examine the state of this fund, when, after a most diligent search, they discovered that the lands had gotten into the hands of Protestant Clergymen, under the appointment to schools with scarcely a scholar, who had leased these vast tracts of land to their own families at the twentieth part of their value ; by which the funds for the purposes of education had dwindled almost to nothing. These sacrilegious transactions were faithfully detailed by this Committee, and reported to the then Irish administration, and, as I am informed, has been by them suppressed, that their ally and creature may not be exposed. I have not this report by me at present ; but I calculated, when I last read it, that if this fund had been faithfully managed, it would have been ample for the establishment of parish schools throughout the whole nation ; where the poor might be instructed in reading, in writing, and

* If I mistake not, Mr. Grattan, Mr. Isaac Corry the late Provost, and the late Mr. Forbes, were of this Committee.

and in keeping accounts, paying each master for the number of scholars he really taught; also for the establishment of barony schools, for teaching mathematics, geometry, and such other practical sciences as are essential to national industry; county schools for those who had shewn genius in the graduate schools, and provincial universities for all sorts of instruction—where, by instituting public examinations, and making the higher seminaries judges how far the junior teachers had earned their salaries—by discriminating those scholars who had been instructed, from those who had been neglected—the diligence and exertions of the public teachers would have been called forth, by making their industry and their interest go hand in hand. But, instead of adopting a system conducive to diligence and industry, these immense funds have been lavished as corruption has thought fit to bestow them—where it has been invariably found, that the greater the salary, the fewer the scholars, and the more neglectful the masters have proved; whilst that class of citizens, whose poverty called most for instruction to keep them from ranking with the brute creation, has been robbed of this sacred fund. Already I hear the blustering tyrant exclaim against instructing that people, on whose necks he has been bred up in the habit of thinking he was born to trample. Already has the French Revolution alarmed these monsters,

monsters, lest education should destroy the usurpation of the tyrant, by restoring the rights of Man. O Ignorance ! thou guardian of bastilles ! thou parent of famine ! thou creator of slaves, and supporter of despots ! thou author of every mischief and of every ill !—how long must we bear thy accursed dominion ? O Knowledge ! thou god of our worship ! thou parent of freedom, and destroyer of anarchy ! thou fountain of virtue ! thou leveller of vanity, of pride and injustice !—how long must we adore thee in vain ?

FOURTH DEDUCTION.

The next deduction I shall mention that has been made from your national stock, is one which is not only extorted in the most iniquitous manner, but is levied on the poorest and the most oppressed part of the nation : I mean those vast sums which are half-yearly levied, for making and mending the bridges and roads, the new establishment of the cavalry constables, and, in short, all the money raised by grand-jury assessment. These burdens have kept pace with the rest, and have been tripled within these very few years. This enormous and growing land-tax is liable to every objection. It is levied on the tenantry of Ireland ; and that tenants who have but a few years or but one year of their lease unexpired, should be forced to pay for the making of bridges and roads, and not the landlord, whose estate is to be bettered for ever,

ever, is the height of injustice. But, unjust as this is, the injustice is carried still farther: For, in violation of every principle of taxation, that taxes should be paid according to the ability of the contributors, these taxes are levied on plowlands, which are districts of various extent, and of different values; that whose produce amounts but to fifty pounds, being assessed as high as the plowland which produces five hundred. And, even in assessing each plowland held by different tenants, the violation of principle is carried still farther, each tenant being rated according to the number of acres he holds; whereby the man whose acres are not worth fifty pence pays as much as the man whose acres are worth fifty shillings. But when the appointment of sheriffs constitutes a part of the wages of the borough-monger in every county, and that he who appoints the sheriff appoints the grand jury, where shall we look for that privilege of freemen, of paying no tax but of our own or our delegates' granting? Or, why should we be surprised that a system originating in the foulest corruption, should branch out into the perjury and jobbing of gentry, the oppression of the occupant tenant, and the peculation of the funds for facilitating national industry in Agriculture, Manufactures and Commerce?

FIFTH DEDUCTION.

The next deduction I shall state which has been made from your national capital, is those vast sums which are annually given in bounties, under the pretence of promoting national industry. That for the encouragement of your fisheries, which has destroyed it, I have noticed already. As to the sums annually squandered by the Dublin society, and the sums granted for the encouragement of linen and yarn, and such like, they are expensive and mischievous jobs, by which the national wealth has been lavished; and the gentry who pocket the plunder have been, long since, branded with the infamous title of Jobbers. But that which is paid for the export of corn deserves to be noticed, because the expence is excessive, and its effects are ill understood. As it is generally thought this bounty has had the public welfare in view, it might seem injudicious in me to do more than remark it as a deduction from the national capital. But, satisfied of its pernicious effect, I will not prostitute my conviction of mind to popularity any more than I will to courtly corruption: For I esteem the one as ill earned when it is to be gained by the suppression of truth to humour popular error, as the other when it is received for betraying popular right. If popularity follows strict adherence to principles, I will gladly accept it; but I will never make it my guide,

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The effect of this bounty has been to raise the price of corn in Ireland; and it is impossible to raise the price of corn, without raising the price of all the other produce of land, as well pasture as tillage, in a like proportion. Let me ask, what would be thought of a direct tax upon the whole of our raw materials in the infancy of our manufactures? Yet this mischievous bounty has not only had the same effect, but it has gone infinitely farther. It has not only raised the price of the raw materials, but it has raised the price of the manufactures, through all their stages to their final completion, by raising the price of provisions, which enter more largely into the price of the manufactures than the materials; and the finer and more valuable the fabric, the more provisions make part of its price. For instance, in a complete piece of steel work or lace worth 100l., the raw materials, the iron and flax, may not be worth five shillings, whilst the provisions consumed by the workman may be worth eighty pounds. Thus, by this bounty, the productions of agriculture, manufactures, and every species of national industry, are not only rendered considerably dearer than they otherwise would be; but, by a parity of reasoning, these of every other nation to which our corn is sent, must be made considerably cheaper; whereby we are not only prevented from exporting our manufactures to them, but they are

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enabled

enabled to send their's to us cheaper than we can make them at home. When such are the pernicious effects of this destructive bounty, need I mention, that when they shall be fully developed, it will not be found to have promoted our tillage? The mode by which the authors of this bounty propose to increase tillage, is by enhancing the price of its produce above the produce of pasture, by which the farmer would be induced to employ more ground under tillage than under pasture. But they seem to have forgotten, that the more they increased the quantity of tillage, the more they diminished the quantity of pasture; and that, supposing the demand for the produce of pasture to remain the same after the bounty as it had been before it was granted, the price of the produce of pasture must rise in an exact proportion to this diminution in quantity, which the bounty must cause; whereas, to ensure the advantage the first effects of the bounty had given to tillage, it was necessary to ensure it this enhancement of price over the produce of pasture, which it is manifest cannot be done. So that, after the first run of this bounty in favour of tillage is over, the original competition between the produce of tillage and pasture resumes its former condition, which the bounty disturbed; with the great and important national detriment of having taken both pasture and tillage from off the solid basis on which the order of nature had placed them, to place them

them on stilts, by which the national industry has been both really and relatively impaired—really, by raising the price of every species of provisions, of every species of manufacture, of the whole produce of national industry, the necessaries and conveniences of life, and consequently by depreciating the value of money in Ireland—relatively, by reducing the price of provisions, materials and manufactures, and consequently by raising the value of money in those countries to which our corn is sent.

The advocates for this bounty seem not to know that there is a natural alliance between tillage and pasture which should never be broken; that the manure which is furnished by pasture, is the only one which affords strength or nutrition; and that all other manures are merely excitements, calling out latent powers, but bringing no additional new ones.

It may be asked, if this bounty is thus injurious, how has it been the subject of praise of both tenants and landlords? I answer, to the tenant whose leases were yet unexpired when the bounty was granted, the enhancement in the price of provisions was a real advantage in the payment of rent, though a disadvantage as a consumer, in supplying himself and his family with the necessaries and conveniences which he had occasion to purchase: But he gained more as a tenant than he lost as a consumer; though, when his lease shall expire,

pire, and that he shall renew it at the enhancement in the price of provisions, the disadvantage as a consumer remains, while the advantage as a tenant will vanish.

The landlord was pleased with the bounty, because it enabled his tenants to pay him his rents with more punctuality; and when the leases expired, he found the rents were advanced. But he did not know, that in the first instance, as long as the original leases existed, although he received the same rent in money, yet as the price of all the articles of consumption were raised by means of the bounty, that these money rents had ceased to be of the same value as they had been when the leases were granted, and before the bounty was given. Nor did he perceive, that, even after the leases expired, and that the rents had been raised by means of the bounty—that as every article of consumption had been raised in the same, or in a greater proportion, his new rent-roll was not of greater, nor perhaps of so great value, on account of the advancement in the price of goods, as his former rent-roll when the prices were lower; whilst the tenants, knowing that when the leases expired the rents would be raised, have been led to exhaust the ground by over-cropping, to throw down the ditches, to plow up the earth of a part of the field, and spread it out—thus destroying the fences, and one half of the land, in order to force a crop from the other. Hence the only advantage that

that could have accrued from this bounty, was a temporary benefit to those tenants whose leases were unexpired when the bounty was granted; whilst the tenants who had to renew, the entire classes of labourers and manufacturers, and the rest of the nation, as producers and consumers, have been, both really and relatively, grievously injured, and the seeds of such mischief have been sown, that the longer they are suffered to grow, the more difficult it will be to destroy them hereafter.

Thus far have I considered this bounty on its own merits. But has there been nothing in the state of Europe for these last eight years, to which the encouragement which Irish corn has met with in foreign markets should be justly ascribed, which cannot be due to this bounty? If the bad effects of this bounty have not been yet felt, have they not been postponed by the extraordinary demand for even Irish corn, which has arisen from the disturbed state of the agriculture of such a vast portion of the best-cultivated nations in Europe? Is it possible that the unexampled waste of the labour of Europe, in a war of such carnage, such havock and plunder, should not have caused an extraordinary demand for the productions of Ireland, situated at the extremity of the theatre of war, and an island? Will it be said that this bounty would have had the same success in the markets of Europe, if the millions who have been slaughtered, and if the millions who are still employed in the
business

business of slaughter and war, had been engaged in the peaceful occupation of husbandry, and if the waste and destruction of provisions and labour had not been substituted in place of the thrift and good management of domestic life? Is it not fact, that from the vast rains which fall in seed-time and harvest, our flour is from fifteen to twenty per cent. inferior in quality to the flour of most parts of Europe? From this extraordinary moisture, is it not fact that our lands retain constant verdure, when most of the pastures of the other nations of Europe are shrivelled and parched?—and does not this clearly demonstrate, that we are by nature inferior in tillage, but superior in pasture?

But analyse this bounty, and take it on its own merits—You will find it a part of a system in which plenty is accounted the heaviest curse, because it would prevent the tenants of Ireland, a numerous, industrious class, from performing those cruel conditions with which they are loaded. You will find it a part of a system in which scarcity is esteemed a blessing, because it enables one class in society to make good its engagements, at the expence of millions whom it dooms to misery and famine. You will find it a part of a system which subsists by the incitement of a goading necessity, and not by the cheering reward of liberal wages. You will find it a part of a system of infernal invention, whose prosperous state is made to depend on the fortuitous evils of the neighbouring world.

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If this bounty, from its own nature, must prove subversive of national industry, it is no less so of national justice. The funds by which this bounty is paid, are raised by taxes on consumable goods, to which every resident inhabitant contributes, whilst the vast absentee property does not contribute one shilling. Yet, if the principles from which I have reasoned be just, the absentees are the only persons who should defray the expence of the bounty. For, every resident landlord, although he should gain by the bounty, yet does he pay a more considerable tax, which this enhancement of price on every article of consumption imposes; and the rest of the nation who are not landlords, are not only obliged to pay the tax which defrays the expence of the bounty, but the still heavier tax in the advancement of price on the necessaries and conveniences of life they consume—no part of which applies to the absentee Irish landlord, who expends his income abroad, where neither the price of consumable goods, nor the value of the money he draws, have been affected by the bounty: Whereby this notable scheme has imposed a heavy and ruinous tax, in order to increase these exports, which bring no return; furnishing another instance of Irish legislative justice, laying burdens where none should have been imposed, and wholly relieving those who should pay the entire. That a Legislature should attempt, on a slender population, sunk in indolence from the ease with which they subsisted on the almost spon-

taneous productions of nature, to rouse them to industry by causing an artificial scarcity, I can easily conceive: But that such expence and pains should be employed to cause such scarcity and dearth of the necessaries of life, by this forced exportation, in a teeming population, is a system of which language affords me no terms sufficiently strong to express my abhorrence.

SIXTH DEDUCTION.

The last deduction I shall mention, which is made from your national wealth, is the enormous expence at which your Government is supported.

In the twofold objects of government, the first is, the affording protection to every member of the community from the violence or injustice of his fellow-citizen. The expence of defending citizen against citizen, must ever depend on the degree of justice on which the constitution and laws are established. When they are such as to secure to every member *equally*, the fullest enjoyment of his natural rights, the *freest* exercise of his industry, and the most *undisturbed* fruition of its produce---when they open to him every means of acquiring the most ample and liberal wages, by which he may procure the necessaries and comforts of life---when, by securing to his industry the most extensive markets for the work he has wrought, it ensures him constant employment---when he suffers no speculation---when no deductions are made from his earnings but what his own interest tells him he should

should readily and willingly grant——trust me, fellow-citizens, a government founded on principles like these, would require no expence to support it. In such a government, every citizen would find a protection for every blessing, and every comfort, human society was meant to afford. Here the laws would be held in veneration, and the legislators would be respected, revered and beloved. In this state, no military execution, no bastilles, no gibbets, no gallies, no burning of houses, would be required to protect and uphold usurpation, corruption, and treason. At the wave of the constable's staff, like the wand of the magician, thousands would flock to his standard in aid of the law. But when, instead of the solid basis of virtue, government is founded on oppression, and the infraction of national right---when a Nation is robbed of its agricultural produce---when the doors of your home markets are thrown wide open to a powerful neighbour, who slaps her's in your face---when corruption, when treason and usurpation, have squandered the sacred funds of her wages---when public virtue is private ruin, public apostacy the sure road to fortune and what are called honours---when truth is called treason, and traitors called loyal,---no wonder an insulted, a pillaged and an oppressed people, should require the bayonet, the flames, and the more deadly corruption, to keep down their writhing; no wonder usurpers, who wallow in the riches their treasons procure them, should seek that shelter from

tyranny which justice denies them. In a state of this kind, as the discontents of the people increased, in proportion as tyrannic means had been used to suppress them, an enlightened mind would perceive that force could not put down a reasoning people, whose growing knowledge enabled them, whose growing independence entitled them, and whose growing numbers compelled them, to demand the abolition of the mass of abuses, which, originating in ignorance, have grown into corruption, and, if suffered to continue, must terminate in famine, in revolution and in blood. It is not by war, which has immolated the youth of the nation; it is not by war, which has lavished the wealth of the people; it is not by war, which has heaped debt upon debt, and burden upon burden; it is not by annulling the trial by jury, nor by exiling thousands without any trial whatever; it is not by repealing every law by which opinions and persons had been protected, and by enacting the most sanguinary laws in their stead; it is not by destroying the press; it is not by introducing foreign mercenaries, stimulated with additional hire, and letting them loose with fire and sword on the ~~public~~---that they are to be convinced, that a system which could require such means of support, does not call for amendment. It is not by heaping calamity on calamity in rapid succession, that the public mind can be dissuaded from believing, that these obvious reforms, which such tyrannic measures have been adopted to stifle, are not now, with more imperious

people

Imperious necessity, more loudly demanded than ever.

But, why should I waste time in proving that government, in the hands of Irish administration, has been a system for supporting the few in oppressing the many, instead of yielding impartial protection? Has it not been by sowing, maintaining and fomenting division, that Irish administrations have governed Ireland? Look to the continuation of civil discord, of plunder and bloodshed, which has infested our island, since the Welch landed in 1165, to this instant, that these hell-hounds intituled Ancient Britons are butchering our disarmed people. Look in this century to the writhings of wretchedness, of misery, of want and oppression, under the different shapes of White-boys, Right-boys, Hearts-of-oak men, Peep-o-day boys, and Steel-men. Yet where is there an instance on record, in which the Government or Legislature in Ireland have inquired into the causes of these constant unerring marks of oppression? No! A system of smothered war between the oppressors and the oppressed, could not bear inquiry, for it would bear redress. Redress means restoration of plunder and restoration of rights. Therefore sanguinary laws and military outrage, whose expences are endless, have been substituted for justice, whose expences are nothing.

It is in vain to attempt to confute my assertion, that disunion, corruption, usurpation, and treason,
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are the means by which England has maintained her dominion in Ireland. I will convict her agents from the writings and dispatches of Strafford. I will convict them upon the testimony of Clarendon. I will quote their own words against them from the letters of Archbishop ~~Butler~~ *Boulter*, who, talking of Wood's halfpence, says, "*But the worst of this is, that it tends to unite protestant with papist; and whenever that happens, good-bye to the English interest in Ireland for ever.*" Great Heavens! on this scale of deserts, what should be the merits of the present administration in the eyes of their British employers? With what a dispatch might Lord Camden emblazon his merits? I ask the drowsy conscience of this deputy—I ask the vindictive accomplices of his administration, who think they are enveloped in the darkness of their murderous deeds—why, in a Government maintained at such an enormous expence, a banditti of sworn extirpators have been suffered to massacre such numbers in the county of Armagh, to demolish so many houses, and to drive so many thousands, men, women, and infants, into the most distant parts of the country for protection? Why, with such numbers of troops, have they not only not protected these persecuted citizens, but why, after disarming the nation, have they armed these infatuated bigots? Let me ask this administration, whether the enormous expences of government in their hands do not arise from the means which they use to oppose the union, the brotherhood

hood and oblivion of religious feuds, in a country hitherto woefully torn with religious dissensions? Nay, let me ask them, whether sums are not issuing, at this instant, from the Public Exchequer, for the infernal purpose of organizing a renewal of religious massacre and carnage, under the banners of Orangemen, whose bond of association consists in an oath to extirpate their fellow-men who do not profess their religion?

The other office of Government is to protect the whole Nation, her Industry, her Rights and her Commerce, from the injuries or interference of any other nation whatever. If there be a nation on earth which should be defended at a moderate expence, Ireland should be that nation.

Nations which violate the sacred rights of other nations, to make constitutions, and to establish governments of their choice—nations which usurp dominion in every quarter of the globe; pillaging, starving and slaughtering the unoffending inhabitants of the East Indies; lashing the wretches they have doomed to slavery in the West Indies; partitioning whole countries for having put down governments they felt oppressive, and for forming constitutions they thought free---nations which dignify Usurpation and Robbery with the title of Empire, who gloss ~~on~~ slaughter by calling it glory, and justify their insolence towards every other country under the pretence of maintaining national honour—with violators of the rights of nations like these, warfare is so engrafted in their state,

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state, that you have no means of estimating the expence of their wars but by their inability to continue them, nor of the continuance of peace but by the time it will take to recruit them. Violators of the rights of nations like these, must be in a state of eternal hostility with those countries whose rights they usurp, or with rival robbers that would deprive them of their prey. Their arm is raised against every nation upon earth, and the arms of the nations of the earth are raised against them. That violators of the rights of nations, who dissipate the earnings of industry, and accumulate burdens, should not sink in the corruption of the ill-gotten wealth they acquire by plunder, extracted from the blood and torture of innocent, unoffending nations, would be to suppose that distributive justice was banished from the earth, and to set at nought the moral principles which govern the world. I ask, in what instance has Ireland violated the sacred rights of fellow-nations? What country does her insatiable avarice lay in desolation and in ruin? In the face of the world, in the name of the Irish nation, I ask, what possible cause for war can Ireland have with any nation on the earth? None, as an aggressor. The only cause for war her interest or her honour can call on her to wage, must be against the usurpers of those sacred rights which she never violated in other countries, and which, if she has the spirit of a nation, she will never see passively violated in her own.

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That you may judge how far protection against the interference of other nations has to do with the monstrous expence of that force with whose maintenance your industry is so grievously burdened, compare the condition of Ireland during the American war with her present condition. At the former period, the Catholic of Ireland lay prostrate under the iron hand of oppression, in sorrow, in poverty, in filth, in famine; robbed of his liberty, stript of every privilege that belongs to Man or his nature, without one particle of property he could say was his own; his protestant countryman placed on his breast, calling to Britain to load him with chains, that with their additional weight he may obstruct the respiration of his Catholic brother---whilst, pitiless from bigotry, remorseless from rage, and setting at defiance every principle of patriotism, honour or justice, he basely surrendered the freedom and rights of his country to Britain, for her unnatural service, and called her his guardian, protector and friend.

Thus stretched on the burning lake of religious dissention, the most humiliating spectacle of human debasement, disheartened, disgraced and defeated—Ireland, exhausted by her intestine divisions, was regarded a prey too contemptible to merit attention. Hence, in the American war, *four thousand* of the refuse of the troops of Great Britain were held sufficient to guard us. But, now

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that the Catholic has been fet on his legs, and that his Protestant brothers stand by him—now that we are an *united* and *powerful* people, *sixty thousand* men have been thought insufficient. I ask you, is this force to defend us from an invasion of France, or to secure an invasion of Britain? Look to the facts. Before the American war, England usurped your legislative power and external dominion, and, by an open avowed domination, had seized on your rights and your commerce. Seats in Parliament for the King's or the purchaser's life, sold for 500l.; when a road or a bridge job, or a turnpike bill, were thought good prostitute wages. But, now that the sacrifice of Irish rights and Irish commerce can be made through the channel of the Irish Parliament only, 3000l. have been the ordinary price for a seat, though but for eight years; whilst sinecure places, pensions and jobs are daily created, that the wages of treason may answer the new rate of purchase. Under the open domination of Britain, your taxes amounted to but half a million; but now, in a few years interval only, during which the Parliament of Ireland has become independent of England, your taxes amount to 3,000,000l. and your debt, which was nothing, is now full ten millions.

Let me unmask the real invasion: let me ask, is this enormous and overwhelming progress in venality and prostitution, for the purpose of perpetuating

tuating to England by corruption and treason, the usurpation of the rights and interests of my country, which, openly, she so lately relinquished? Is it to support this accursed invasion of our national rights, that our country has been filled with the troops of Great Britain? If the independence of our country is but a name, and that the open, avowed domination of Great Britain has been exchanged for a deadly influence gained by corruption and treason, to what end have we been drained, even to beggary and famine, to pay for a government to guard us from foreign oppression? With the strongest pretensions to cheap government, with compactness of territory, with insular strength, and without a single act of injustice on our part against any nation upon earth, where is there a country whose expences are more enormous from such mutilated means, or whose progress in debt is more rapid? To detail the various extortions of Irish Government, would fill a volume of such jobbing, such corruption and plunder, as is not to be found in history, nor even in fable. Were it not that it would lead me too far from my subject, I could shew you that a revenue extorted by intoxication and gaming from the poor and the wretched, whilst the lands of the rich were free from all taxes and burdens, fully answered the injustice and vices by which it was raised, by the waste and corruption with which it has been expended. I might ask, what had 120,000*l.* annually paid in pensions to

the Members of both Houses of Parliament, their assignees and their creatures, to do with your external or internal protection? I might ask, what had the enormous sum of 500,000l. annually paid in sinecure places in the same Parliamentary channel, with overpaid deputy on deputy, for transacting the business, if there chanced to be any, to do with your external or internal protection? I might ask, what account has been given of the 120,000l. annually passed in the public accounts as incidents, a term which is well known to mean the peculation and jobs for which some plausible name cannot be found? I might ask, why those ogres of the revenue continue to plunder the nation, nominally, of twenty per cent. for its collection, but really of forty; the exactions and extortions of a single collector often amounting to one thousand pounds yearly, whilst the salary which appears in the public accounts does not amount to more than one hundred? But if you wish to be informed of Irish politics, and Irish finances, it is not by reading Harrington, nor Sydney, nor Locke, nor Stewart, nor Montesquieu, nor Smith's "Wealth of Nations." No! it is the Court Calendar* you must examine.

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* So unblushing is Usurpation and Corruption in Ireland, that the common Almanacks contain the names of the Proprietor of each seat in Parliament, with a faithful Catalogue of the Wages which each Prostitute earns.

There the constituents, representing themselves, with a correct list of the sinecure places and pensions they hold, will exhibit a faithful description of Irish administration, Irish politics, and Irish finances.

Having now given you a summary account of the manner in which you have been robbed of your unalienable, national means of acquiring national capital, and of the various ways by which the slender stock your industry has gathered, under its mutilated means, has been plundered and dissipated; I trust I have impressed upon your minds, that your national capital, that sacred fund for the employment of your national industry, has been cruelly, corruptly and enormously plundered.

How the Rate of Wages has been reduced by this Plunder of the National Capital.

THE first evil which I shall state, that has arisen from this robbery of your national capital, is the low rate of wages by which your national industry is so miserably paid. This is an obvious and incontrovertible conclusion---the rate of wages, in every country, must depend on the proportion which capital bears to population. If the sacred fund for the employment of industry has been protected and fostered by an honest Government and a faithful Legislature, its abundance must ensure the industrious ample wages with all its blessings.

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But when it has been betrayed and dissipated by corruption and treason, the laborious are thrown at the mercy of their employers, and the industrious mass, instead of receiving liberal wages as a right, are reduced, by an accursed chain of systematic oppression, to prostrate themselves with abject servility before their employers, and to beg for their miserable hire, more as alms than as wages. Often and often have I heard humanity call out for a law, for doubling the wages of the People of Ireland. This was indeed the language of humanity ; but it was the language of one who knew not the means by which his prayers could be accomplished. No law to oblige the employer to augment wages, can create one farthing of capital, or diminish the population ; and yet, to enable the employers to augment wages, it must have done one or the other : For it is manifest to the meanest capacity, that, as the present national capital can do no more than furnish the present low wages to the existing population, a law which would oblige the employers to double the wages must leave one-half the population without any wages at all. Although it cannot be effected by direct laws, forcing the employers to pay the labourers more than the proportion between capital and population would have obliged them, let us not hence conclude, that the Legislature cannot pass laws by which the national capital could be augmented, and the wages of the industrious bettered.

tered. It is by passing laws founded on national justice and national right, that this great end can be obtained. It is by these laws only that nations can acquire national wealth ; and it is the abundance of national wealth which ensures, to the industrious, liberal, generous wages.

That, from the Robbery of the National Capital, the Tenants are forced to pay such immoderate high Rents.

THE next evil which has arisen from this reduction and pillage of the national capital, is the present high rents which the tenants of Ireland are obliged to pay for their farms.

The value of land, like every other article for human use, is regulated by the proportion which the quantity bears to the number of bidders who must be supplied. By dissipating the national capital, and by sacrificing the markets and commerce of Ireland, the people have been prevented from selling manufactures, if they could make them, as effectually as if the Legislature of Ireland had passed a law which directly prohibited their fabrication or sale. Thus, by sacrificing every other species of industry but that which is employed in famished and beggarly farming, the renting of land is almost the only means by which the People of Ireland can procure a subsistence. Hence, as the population increases, the number of
bidders

bidders who cannot live without land is also augmented, until they so bid against one another, that the portion of the produce which they can retain for themselves, is not sufficient to afford shelter, cloathing or food for them, their wives and their children. If the national capital, instead of being pillaged and plundered, had been protected, millions would have flowed upon agriculture; whereby the present wretched farmers, without means, and without capital, would be succeeded by wealthy intelligent yeomen. The place of the present half-starved working cattle would be supplied by strong well-fed teams: houses fit for human beings, out-houses and barns for farming use, would be built: lands would be drained and manured, and gates be erected: millions would be employed in manufactures and commerce, whereby thousands of occupations would be created, which would prevent lands from being at a monopoly price: home markets would start up at the doors of the farmer as the manufactures increased; and the vast deduction which is now made from the value of materials and provisions, by the transportation and freight of such bulky commodities, would be saved, and ten times their value virtually exported in the complete manufacture; whereby the lands of Ireland would yield fourfold more than at present, the rents of the landlords might be increased, whilst that part of the produce which would be retained by the tenants would be fully adequate

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to supply them and their families with every comfort of life.

The Destruction of National Industry from the high Profits of Capital.

THE next evil I shall state which has arisen from the pillage and robbery of your national capital, is the destruction of every species of national industry which it has caused.

The profits of capital are regulated in every country by the competition which exists between the capitalists. The more abundant the capital, the greater the competition, and, consequently, the lower the profits. The more scanty the capital, the less the competition, and, consequently, the profits are higher. When it is considered how largely the profits of capital enter into the price of every species of merchandize and manufacture ---when it is observed what an advantage the industry of these countries possesses, whose profits of capital are moderate, over those whose profits are high---when it is considered, what a greater division of labour takes place, what a superiority of machinery, and what a vast abridgment of labour, these circumstances occasion---it is impossible not to be strongly impressed with the extent of the deterioration which a nation must suffer, in every part of its national industry, from the plunder and robbery of its national capital.

*The National Mind is injured by the Plunder of
Industry's sacred Funds.*

THAT the industrious classes, on whose labour the prosperity and happiness, not only of themselves, but of every other class in society, so wholly depend, should not receive sufficient wages to rescue them from famine and misery, is a reflection at which the heart sickens, and humanity grows pale. But in what terms shall I describe this last evil, which arises from the sacrilegious plunder of industry's holy exchequer?---whereby the human mind is debased and brutalized; that mind which converts swamps and barrenness into fertility, or reduces the most fruitful soil, the most favoured situation, into a brothel for prostitution, a sty for wretchedness, and a receptacle for every species of oppressor and oppressed. The most valuable property a nation can possess, is an highly cultivated mind. No property gives so decided an advantage to one country over another, let the soil, the climate, or the situation on the globe, be what they may, as a superiority of intellect. In vain shall you have a fertile soil, a temperate climate, and an insular state, unless you have minds sufficiently educated to know how to turn them to the greatest advantage. Look to Holland! from the moment she threw off the Spanish yoke, and established Liberty, how she converted swamps, rescued from the sea, into a garden! Look to Switzer-

Switzerland ! from the moment she threw off the Austrian yoke, how she has cultivated her mountains to the highest summit ! Look to America ! from the day she freed herself and her industry from the domination of England, with what rapidity she has cleared her woods and drained her morasses ! Compare the wealth, the comforts, and happiness of these nations, under the obstacles which nature has placed in their way, with the most favoured countries whose industry is obstructed by tyranny, and sold by treason. See what extremes of wealth and poverty, insolence and meanness, luxury and famine, idleness and meagre exertion, their inhabitants exhibit. O Liberty ! deity of my adoration ! in vain shall the foul calumny of prostitution attempt to sully your purity, by confounding you with that licentiousness which you abhor, that anarchy you execrate, or with the violation of that property you only can raise, you only can protect. Yes ! Industry is a scion of Liberty : she can spring but from her root ; she can exist but under her shelter. Industry lives but by the sacred fund which rewards her exertions. It is Liberty which rears and protects this sacred fund ; it is by despotism, corruption and treason, that it is squandered. You, then, accursed ! who have betrayed and plundered this sacred fund—it is you who have destroyed the industry of your country ; it is you who have vitiated her mind.

Liberal reward invigorates industry. It leads the mind to activity and diligence in the useful occupations of life; teaches the comforts of cleanliness, the advantages of sobriety and temperance, the love of order, and the observance of decency; ensures the calm serenity of a good conscience, and excludes the agitation and remorse of a bad one: it supplies the mind with constant employment, by which it attaches it to virtue, and rescues it from vice; instills a love of the country by the blessings it imparts; establishes a proud independence; and teaches the mind to account a life stained with dishonour, a burden too grievous to be longer supported. These, honest patriots, virtuous legislators, and upright magistrates! are the blessings your labours bestow on a grateful, a virtuous, a prosperous, and a happy people.

If these are the blessings that flow from a faithful guardianship of industry's sacred funds—if these are the praises due to those who have discharged this pious trust with fidelity—how shall I describe the misery that flows from the venality, corruption, and plunder, by which these sacred funds have been dissipated? What are the execrations that should fall on the heads of the sacrilegious banditti by whom they are seized and betrayed?

Robbed of all its wages, industry sinks into lassitude. The mind, faint from hopeless exertion, finds no inducement to action, no spur to invention, no desire for instruction. Indolence seizes

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on the victim, when industry brings no reward, no blessing. It consigns the wretch it has made, to wallow in filth, by placing the means of being cleanly beyond his attainment. His mind, surrounded with the boundless prospect of misery, flies to the oblivion of intoxication, to relieve it from the torture of thought: deprived of constant and cheering employment to attach it to virtue, it falls into vice; whilst, compelled by his own and his children's wants, the calls of nature convert crime into duty. Without property, comforts, or rights to require protection, he regards laws as restrictions, which prevent him from seizing on the means of relieving his wants. Robbed of the peace and security attendant on the observance of justice—stung with agitation and fears which await its infraction—immersed in want, abject, dependant, and in slavery—losing all love for his country in the misery it teems with—his mind lies vitiated, debased, and degraded. These, stupid, venal, vicious legislators! are your works. These, mercenary traitors! are your deeds. These, panders of legislative treason and national dishonour! are the calamities with which you afflict a miserable, discontented, execrating nation.

Compare the natural dispositions of my countrymen with the perversions corruption has wrought. Behold the host—with what hospitality he entertains his guests!—what joy sparkles in his eyes when he sees he has succeeded in rendering his house agreeable! his wife and daughters
amiable,

amiable, affectionate, unaffected, partaking and contributing to the general joy! his boys, too, attentive, obliging, good-natured, seconding the wishes and participating in the delights of their parents, which nothing disturbs but the idea of departure, when an entreaty from every tongue begs a farther stay, and even the infants cling about the knees of the guest, and lisp out their little prayers, as if hospitality had been an intuitive virtue! If you enter but the wretchedest hovel, all the poor soul has he lays before you, whilst the loss of his humble meal is forgotten in the exercise of this national duty!—These are the natural virtues of my beloved country! In the boundless hospitality of my countrymen, I behold the emblem of the fertility of its soil; and, in the mild, endearing, affectionate disposition of my country^{men}, I see the emblem of its temperate climate.

But when I turn from this delightful contemplation---when I view the Gentry of Ireland as public men, as Citizens who should discharge their duty to their Country---instead of that proud independence which dignifies the soul, instead of that love of the country, that fire, which impels the patriot to offer up his life to its freedom---my heart sickens at the sight of the continued chain of meanness, venality and dependence, by which the entire mind is bound in an organized system of corruption, from the Castle to the Cabin, where consequence and emolument are purchased by the most abject, unlimited abandonment of
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the mind's independence, of the impulse of honour, of the dictates of reason, of the freedom of opinion and the choice of action. When, amongst the youth of this Gentryship, I look for that indignant abhorrence of oppression, that high spirit which spurns servile submission, or those ebullitions of patriotism which overleap the discretion of riper years, pleads its privilege in justification, and finds a ready acquittal from judges who have not forgotten the days of their youth, I behold them sneaking into life under the yoke of prostitution and corruption, and into the Senate under the subjugation and suppression of every honest thought and of every fine feeling---bred up in the principles of their fathers, in the faith and belief that patriotism was ruin, but that venality and infamy were the ways to preferment and fortune---with hearts so steeled against every generous principle, that the glorious examples of Greece and Rome have become subjects for brutal degeneracy to scoff at, where corruption had extinguished every propensity to emulation, exhibiting all the depravity of age, without one single virtue of youth.

In vain I fly from this disgraceful debasement of mind in the upper class, to seek content and happiness in the lower. When I have beheld a sequestered hovel, Here, at least, said I, the owner must find a sanctuary from the ravenous gripe of oppression. But alas! even here, the land-shark, the tithe-shark, the collectors of land-rates and church-rates,

rates, have prowled, one after the other; like the hawk, the kite, the eagle and vulture, passing in constant succession, in the most lonely retirement, in search of their prey, where the sufferings of poverty were secondary to the dread and horror of being devoured. How many thousand instances of prowling and prey have I witnessed in Connaught, in Munster, in Leinster, and even in Ulster! In the awful presence of God, I ask those men who wring the wages of their prostitution from the wretchedness they have created by an unconditional surrender of their opinion, their honour and character, by sacrificing the rights, the interests and liberties of their country—are they aware of the humiliating state of debasement and misery to which their venality and treason have reduced the millions, duty and justice required, they should raise and protect?

Instead of selling to Britain the several sources from which the sacred fund for Ireland's industry should be supplied and augmented, conceive what a vast accession of capital, the millions now annually exported without a return would furnish. Conceive your home market, which is now sacrificed to Britain by a total infraction of reciprocity, placed on that equitable basis which national justice so imperiously calls for—conceive the markets of England thrown open to Ireland, on the same conditions the markets of Ireland are thrown open to her—conceive the millions which are now squandered in these monstrous establishments,

ments, under the pretence of promoting religion, the millions squandered in ruinous litigation, and in the thousand channels of poisonous corruption, restored to the sacred fund for the employment of national industry—conceive your commerce freed from those imposts with which it is loaded to pay for its ruin, and rescued from those swarms of blighting locusts that generate in corruption, fatten on extortion, and make perjury their ordinary regimen—could the mind figure to the most enraptured imagination, a more delightful prospect than the harbours of Ireland would furnish, thronged with the ships of the commercial world, crowding to supply an industrious and prosperous country with the productions of their's, and taking the surplus of your's in return? Who can calculate the effects of such an accession of capital acting on a population of four millions of healthy, intelligent, enterprising people, with such advantages of fertility, situation, and insular blessings? How many millions, who now drag on a miserable existence, in struggling to maintain themselves and their children upon the wretched wages the present wretched capital affords them, would be restored to plenty, comfort and ease? Conceive how the present degraded and debased mind of a people bent to the earth under poverty and oppression, would, under a just application of the funds for instruction, be raised to independence and freedom—conceive how many who now assume the

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name of Gentleman but to disgrace it—who swarm through the Country under the various shapes of perjured grand-jury jobbers, patronage expectants for prostituted dependence, revenue officers, land pirates, tithe sharks, hedge attorneys, and thousands such like, who live by the oppression and plunder of the poor and the wretched---would then be tempted to lay aside their present disgraceful occupations, to seek their fortunes in the profits of well-rewarded industry.

When I compare the proud situation my country should hold amongst nations, were she possessed of those unalienable rights no power on earth has a right to usurp, with the contemptible insignificance to which I see her reduced---when I compare the wealth and the blessings my country ought to possess, with the poverty and wretchedness with which she is loaded---my heart is torn with indignation, with shame, with grief: And whilst the gloom of a solitary dungeon, the calumny and insults with which my name has been loaded, the being torn from every endearing tie that was linked to my heart, have not been able to extract one iron drop; at the recollection of the wrongs and sufferings of my beloved country, tears gush from my eyes, and the hand which has been charged with having written treason against her, would gladly grasp the sword to avenge injuries it can scarcely hold the pen to describe.

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The Remedy for the Evils of our Political State.

To remedy these manifold evils, to which I have traced the miseries and sufferings of my country, it has been acknowledged by every man who is not within the pale of usurpation and corruption, that CATHOLIC EMANCIPATION, and a restoration of POPULAR REPRESENTATION, are the only efficient expedients. But if justice, which requires that no man, much less the decided majority of a nation, should be deprived of his political rights on account of his religious opinions, ordains that the Catholics should not have fewer rights than the Protestants; and if it is an incontrovertible fact, that such is the present usurpation of rights, as well Protestant as Catholic, that even though the Catholics were admitted to the fullest participation of the rights possessed by their Protestant fellow-citizens at present, both Protestant and Catholic would find, that the rights of which they were robbed, were infinitely more numerous, and more important, than those they enjoyed, even before the present annihilation of every vestige of constitutional right---it must appear manifest to the most superficial observer, that Catholic exaltation to the present height of Protestant freedom only, must prove wholly inadequate to the establishment of our NATIONAL LIBERTY. Disdaining, then, to add one argument more, to the thousands which remain already unanswered, in favour

of the Emancipation of my Catholic Countrymen, letting it rest on the solid basis of justice, and blending it with the *General Cause*, I shall conclude this address with an investigation of our *General Right*.

The Remedy to be had by establishing the true Political Principles only.

I am aware that I am embarking on that vast and important subject, the Rights of Man, which agitates the most civilized parts of the world. I am aware that the popular mind has been distracted with that chaos of controversy with which it has been overwhelmed by the furious, the bigotted, the ignorant, the prejudiced, and the venal. I am aware that the public mind has been dragooned and deluded, by a man notorious for the total abandonment of every principle which has recommended him to the public confidence---at the head of every thing that was corrupt, or that could be corrupted---supported by the wildest and most extravagant declamation of men of the most ungovernable passions, the most inveterate prejudices, and of a total deficiency of judgment---joined by the timid, the ignorant, and those who, regarding public trust as a speculative profession for private emolument, made alarm an excuse for deserting those whose adherence to the principles of Liberty appeared to them too losing a game to answer their views.

views. I am aware that this heterogeneous collection of knaves and dupes, have branded every proposal for reforming monstrous and growing abuses, and every reference to the principles of Liberty, as treasonable attempts to subvert the constitution. I am aware that their leader, by making the abuses of the constitution to stand for the constitution itself, has had the address to convince them, that subverting the liberties of the country, was supporting the constitution; and that to tear away every restraint, by which the vast power with which he is invested, had been controuled, to heap debt upon debt, abuse upon abuse, expence upon expence, and corruption on corruption, were the only effectual remedies by which new and unheard-of calamities were to be cured. I am aware, that, as long as the mover and manager of this aggregate mass can persuade them that the resources of the country are inexhaustible, and that, as long as the facility with which he continues to draw millions after millions from the fund of national industry, to squander them in supporting his power and projects, gains him credit for his fallacious assertion of the prosperous state of the nation, it will not be in the power of reason to work a conviction against the delusion: But I am aware, also, that when the confidence which has arisen from this false assertion of inexhaustible resources, from the pomp of war, and the glare of extravagance, shall shortly be succeeded by the despondency

ency and horror of national bankruptcy and universal calamity, the violation of principles will be grievously felt, and their sterling value shortly acknowledged. I have clung to them in the worst of times ; and, under the heaviest misfortunes, will never cease, but with my life, to offer them for your adoption. Trust me, my countrymen, that to explain the political phænomena of our times, to which it is agreed on all sides the history of mankind affords nothing analogous, the primordial principles of human nature are the rudder, the compass and polar star, by which you must steer in the storm, in the new and unexplored regions which human society has so recently entered. By these you will see, that mankind are advancing into a state far beyond any thing they had ever attained ; where, as the mass have changed their dependencies, relations, and habits of thinking, their institutions must undergo a similar change. Every work in the creation has its fixed principles of existence and action. When Newton found out the principle of gravitation, he put to rout the thousand absurdities which preceded this simple discovery ; and the science of the movements of the myriads of worlds became intelligible to the most humble capacity. And, as self-interest, tempered by sympathy, is the acknowledged principle which regulates and governs the existence and movements of human action and human society, why should we not account for the phænomena which have appeared in one science,

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as well as those which appear in another, by a strict adherence to principle?

The Laws which regulate the Descent, Transfer, or Sale of Property, regulate the Nature of Government.

PROPERTY is the machinery by which self-interest is worked. It is a collection of the necessities, conveniences, and luxuries, for human use; and, as long as mankind are subject to their present wants, desires, and vanities, those who possess property must possess the means of influencing the conduct, and commanding the services, of those who have none. Hence the laws which monopolize property, monopolize power also: hence the direction which the laws give to the descent of property, the freedom or restraint with which they admit of its transfer or sale, influence the nature of Government; and hence the absolute necessity for examining the nature of those predisposing laws respecting property, in order to account for the phenomena which appear in civil society. If the existing institutions are consonant to the self-interest of the bulk of mankind, in their present advanced state of knowledge, independence and industry, they will stand: But, if they are repugnant to their self-interest, no force, no device, can uphold them. Convinced of this truth,

truth, I will judge of their validity, or fall, by the standard of the self-interest of mankind.

The Origin and Effects of the Laws for the Monopoly of Property.

IN the early and barbarous ages of Europe, the only property which was in existence, was the spontaneous productions of the earth; and when lands were monopolized, all power was monopolized also. Hence, by establishing the monopolizing laws of primogeniture, entails and settlements, in favour of a few proprietors, all power became confined to these few. The mass of the people were consigned to dependance and slavery; and an Aristocratic despotism was established over men, whose minds, and whose wants, were nothing removed from the state of the herds they attended. Bred up in the habit of thinking that the inhabitants belonged to the soil, service appeared a natural return for the subsistence the proprietor gave them. The vassal, wholly ignorant of his self-interest on the broad basis of Man's inprescriptible right, saw it only in the degraded, subordinate state of a slave. Finding that, in his isolated, helpless condition, resistance must prove destructive, and that, to promote his self-interest, he must use his best exertions to recommend himself to the lord of the soil—the self-interest of the vassal

sal was so blended with the self-interest of the master, that fidelity, allegiance, loyalty, and clanship, became the main bond between the governed and governing parties; and the self-interest of the whole society was so centered in clanship, that the meanest vassal felt as much interested in every thing which aggrandized the clan, as the lord of the hord. In this state, which is the true state of hereditary aristocracy, the institutions founded on those laws had nothing to fear from the resistance of self-interest on the part of the people.

The Phænomenon which has appeared in the Political State of Europe accounted for, by considering the Effects of the Laws for the Monopoly of Property.

HERE I could wish the public mind would pause, and look back on this barbarous state, from which those laws of monopoly, aristocracy, and despotism, originally sprung: For it is from the pernicious consequences which have followed from having continued those laws of monopoly, in the commercial and civilized state of the nations of Europe, that I mean to trace this phænomenon which has appeared. It is from the continuance of those laws of primogeniture, entails and settlements, that I mean to account for the revolution which has taken place in parts of Europe, and for that revolution which must go through every other

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commercial and civilized part where those laws are in force: the truth of which will appear from demonstrating how incompatible those laws are with the self-interest of the bulk of mankind, and how severely they feel that they are so.

That these Laws of Monopoly are injurious to the Self-Interest of Mankind, by militating against the Political Œconomy of Nations.

THE direct and obvious tendency of these laws is to support a monopoly of land, and to prevent it from breaking down into smaller portions by equitable and natural laws of descent, whereby tenants on short leases have been substituted in place of small proprietors. It cannot be controverted, that, even on cultivated land, the ability of a proprietor who has the whole produce to expend in cultivation, must be greater than that of the tenant, who is obliged to pay such a considerable part of the produce in rent to a landlord; and that the inclination, the affection and interest of a small proprietor, who has the whole benefit of his improvements secured to him and his family for ever, must lead him to make better and more durable improvements, than a tenant on a short or uncertain tenure, which may or may not be renewed, according to the caprice of a landlord, but, at all events, to be raised in proportion to the

the extent of the improvements he shall have made.

But on cultivated lands the evil is infinitely worse: For, as the only inducement Man has to employ his labour, or to expend his capital, is the profit they are likely to yield, it can never be the interest of a tenant on a determinable tenure to improve, at such an expence as uncultivated lands must require, for another to reap the advantage. Hence the effect of those laws all over Europe, where they are in force, has been, that the cultivation of the land is infinitely behind what it otherwise would be, and that such immense tracts of land, even in the most wealthy countries of Europe, are wholly uncultivated; which has proved destructive to the interest of the lower classes by diminishing the supply of the necessaries and conveniences of life, and has been severely felt in the most populous and commercial nations.

But the pernicious effects of these laws of monopoly have not been confined to injuring agriculture only. They have extended their baneful influence to every branch of political œconomy.

I have observed, that the industry of nations depended on the state of the national capital which incites it. This valuable fund can be augmented only by the thrift and good management of individuals, and diminished by their extravagance. But it is the nature of men possessed of great he-

reditary property to be extravagant, whilst it is
 the nature of men of moderate fortune to be the
 reverse: And so generally is this the case, that
 it is difficult to find an instance of a large heredi-
 tary property that is, not only, not expended un-
 productively in vanity and folly, but that is not
 encumbered with considerable debts, for sums bor-
 rowed from the funds of industry, and squandered
 in idleness; whilst, among men of moderate for-
 tunes, you will not find one in a thousand who
 has not added to the national fund by thrift and
 good management. Besides, laws like these, found-
 ed in injustice, pass, from habit, on the minds of
 those who live under them, for justice. Hence
 merchants, factors, and men who make large for-
 tunes by their industry, are led to leave the bulk
 of their acquirement to an eldest son, and to dis-
 inherit the rest of their children; whereby im-
 mense sums are drawn from the sacred fund of
 industry, to be expended in unproductive pomp
 and vanity, instead of being divided amongst a
 number, who would have continued to employ
 it in the way it was originally acquired.

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These Laws are not only subversive of Political Economy, in all its branches ; but they are subversive, also, of the Laws of Justice, of Nature, and of Social Happiness.

Is it not from the operation of these laws, that the younger children of the monopolists these laws create, are bred up in a state of luxury and extravagance, during their father's life-time, which they are unable to support honestly after, from being disinherited at his death ? Is it not from the operation of these laws, that this extensive class, who should be the hopes of the genius and spirit of the nation, contract habits and wants which fit them for dependence and prostitution ? Is it not from the operation of these laws, that an eldest son is invested with that share of property that enables him to monopolize political power, which he sells for public money, wherewith he gratifies the wants and habits of his disinherited family, at the sacrifice of the independence and patriotism of those who are bought, and at the expence of the rights, the liberties and property of the people, who are plundered to pay for the disgraceful and ruinous purchase ? Is it not from the powerful impulse of paternal affection to counteract the effects of these laws, by which children have been disinherited by the parent before he had felt the force of a parent's affection, that there is scarcely
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an instance where the father and the heir-apparent are not at variance, from the means which the former pursues to prevail on the latter to provide for those very children, whom the settlement, which confers the whole estate on one son, has so cruelly beggared?

The baneful effect of these laws, is to create a few overgrown rich men, and to keep the mass of the people from being as opulent, as comfortable, and as independent, as they otherwise would be; by which social happiness has been materially injured. Who will compare a state of society, where the many are immersed in extreme poverty, and the few are gorged with inordinate wealth, with a society where these extremes are destroyed, and general mediocrity pervades the entire? In this natural and just state, the improvement of the mind and the exertions of talents are called forth, from their being the only means by which men can gratify their rational wants and desires. The extraordinary energies of the soul are excited, by being the only means of attaining consideration, or consequence, in the eyes of the world. Good temper, affability, and good manners, are cultivated, from their being the only passports to the esteem or the affection of their associates. This estate fits mankind for giving, and receiving, those interchanges of kindnesses by which friendships are made and confirmed; whilst ease, cordiality, and good sense,

sense, pervade this happy state, where society is
 rational recreation from rational pursuits, in which
 the heart, unadulterated by vanity, preserves those
 fine-spun feelings which constitute the highest
 state of human felicity. Contrast this delightful
 state with the meanness and servility which abject
 poverty generates in the mass of mankind. Con-
 trast it with that state in which the energy of the
 soul is destroyed in minds born to a profusion of
 every thing it could wish or desire, independent of
 any exertion it need make to attain them. See to
 what adulteration the mind born to great wealth is
 exposed, from the adulation and meanness by
 which the indigent solicit its favour. See, when
 the mind passes that degree of wealth which is
 capable of satisfying every rational desire, how vi-
 tiated and destructive it becomes, in launching into
 vanity and vice, and in purchasing up the will,
 the opinion and independence of the poor and
 needy. Who that will not prefer that state, which
 would result from the laws of nature and justice, to
 that by which these infernal laws of monopoly have
 debased and degraded the world? Who is so de-
 praved as to prefer a tinsel, gaudy, listless pageant,
 set here and there, upon a ground of human
 wretchedness and misery; where the human spe-
 cies, even in the most populous countries where
 these laws are in force, are harassed to skeletons to
 earn subsistence; whilst the food they eat, the
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draught they drink, the cloaths they wear, the house they inhabit, the air they breathe, and the light they see by, are taxed, that the hard-earned wages of industry may pass into the rapacious hands these laws have invested with power, without restraint or controul? Who is so depraved as to prefer this state of misery, formed by the extremes of wealth and poverty, drudgery and listlessness, to the cheerful, joyous state of general plenty and happy mediocrity; where, in a teeming population, the eye is feasted with the delightful prospect of the highest cultivation, abounding with habitations, emblems of cleanliness, of comfort and plenty, inhabited by a people whose neat attire, whose affable manner, whose sleek and joyous countenance, bespeak moderate labour, with well-rewarded industry; whilst the ear is enraptured with the carol and the song, where the light foot beats time to the still lighter heart, exhibiting a country alive to joy, to freedom and to happiness?

These are blessings which these laws of monopoly have dissipated, without conferring one single benefit in alleviation on mankind. If it is pretended that these laws are useful in guarding against the extravagance of mankind, I answer, that the great proprietors whom those laws have created, and whom they are still, in vain, retained to support, are the most extravagant class in society; and that the few instances of imprudence which are to be found amongst those of moderate fortunes, have
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arisen from their minds being debauched by the example of vanity and folly which their rich neighbours have set them.

If it is pretended that these laws of monopoly oblige parents to provide for their children, I answer, that they are laws of disinheritance ; and though they were not so, I will appeal to you, who have felt what it is to have children, whether the strength of paternal affection is not a sufficient and the best guarantee for the performance of this paramount duty ; and if any one should be found vile enough to deny it, he would only bear testimony to the depravity of his own heart, but not against the validity of paternal affection.

If it should be pretended, that the extravagance of these few overgrown rich gives encouragement to industry, than which a more false or mischievous notion cannot be propagated or accredited, I answer, that the national industry, which is now expended in making the trinkets and baubles, which are neither conveniences, elegancies, nor necessities, for those over-wealthy, would be better excited and better employed in producing the necessities and comforts of life for the mass of the people, who, by the abolition of these laws, and the diffusion of property, would be enabled to buy and consume them—I answer, that it would be more for the comfort, the improvement and happiness of mankind, if the vast portion of industry which

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is now wasted in fabricating objects of mere vanity and fashion, which these laws create a race to consume, in a course of emulous hostility, and the most frivolous contention that ever tortured the mind or vitiated the heart—were employed in constructing better houses, and in furnishing better cloathing and food, for the industrious, unvitiated classes, who compose the bulk of mankind.

If it is pretended that these overgrown fortunes give encouragement to the arts, I answer, that the abolition of these laws of monopoly, by diffusing general wealth, would diffuse general education and knowledge, which is the true source of every art; and that the general opulence of a nation is a better customer and a better encourager of the arts, than a few, however wealthy; and that the exhibitions and lyceum of an opulent nation are more likely to afford liberal recompense to the artist than the decoration of a few family mansions.

Besides these destructive Effects of these Laws, they are subversive of the Civil and Political Rights and Liberties of Mankind.

I will not descend to prove that the Rights of Man are unalienable and imprescriptible, nor to expose the rant and declamation which would set up the absurd institutions of an infant, ignorant, barbarous age, for eternal laws to bind mankind, in the most matured, the most aged and enlightened times of
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of the world. But, holding in contempt and detestation every institution, however rooted by time, or supported by force or corruption, which is incompatible with the liberty, happiness and interest of Man, I will assume it as an indisputable fact, that Mankind are entitled to, and must possess, every right their state of knowledge, and advancement in civil society, enables them to claim or maintain; and that their own ignorance and incapacity are the only barriers which can stand between them and their fullest enjoyment. I feel happy in having brought this great question to this point, in which every civil and political right of Man is concentrated: For it is in scrutinizing the merits of those predisposing laws which regulate the passage and transfer of property, that a few simple principles, which explain the means by which the Rights of Man can be secured, must put to rout those volumes, with which the advocates for civil, political and religious despotism, bigotry and prejudice, have so long distracted the mind of the European world. The history of every age, and of every nation, bears unerring and invariable testimony, that it is a principle in the nature of Man to abuse the power with which he has been invested, and that the only effectual controul is that which rests in the hands of the people, by whom, and for whose use, the power was delegated, and who are the most interested that it should be ex-

exercised according to the extent for which it was given.

If, then, it cannot be controverted, that property gives the means of influencing the conduct and commanding the services of others, who will assert that those laws, which monopolize property, do not furnish the few, in whose favour they act, with the means of monopolizing power also? Who will assert, that those laws which prevent property from spreading, and creating a number of small proprietors, do not prevent the existence of the only controul by which those who become invested with power can be checked or restrained? If the true question be, not about the Rights of Man, but about the best means by which he shall attain them and keep them, who can argue in favour of laws which create monopoly of power and usurpation of rights, and destroy the only efficient controul by which the rights of the people can either be gained or preserved? This is a ground I will never surrender. It is that on which, not only representation, but every other civil or political right Man can claim or enjoy, must depend. As long as you suffer these laws of monopoly to exist, how can you have an adequate, efficient, controuling, constituent body? The true predisposing state for perfect representation, is to create the greatest possible number of independent electors, and to destroy the monopolized power by which they may be influenced, bribed or debauched. As long

long as those laws exist which monopolize the whole of a country in the hands of half a dozen proprietors, it will be in vain to attempt to reform representation; those laws have vitiated it at its source, and impurity must accompany it throughout. The power which the great proprietor exercises over his tenant as an elector, is fatal: As landlord, the hopes of renewal and of indulgence, and the dread of resentment—as a rich man, the influence by bribery—and as a monopolist of political power, the patronage of places, emoluments and jobs—are all more immediate considerations with the elector, than the indirect and more distant benefits accruing from the exercise of the constituent's rights. So wholly destructive are those laws of monopoly of any thing like adequate, efficient representation, that, as long as they exist, no human device can be invented for establishing restraints by which those invested with power can be controuled. During the continuance of those laws, extending the rights of election to the poorer citizens, would, under the appearance of adding to the strength of the constituent body, be to dilute its force, by pouring in on it a vast quantity of absolute weakness. To violate the right of universal suffrage, is to infringe the most sacred right of Man. But as long as those laws of monopoly exist, the general exercise of the right, under the appearance of Democracy, renders Aristocracy omnipotent. The people, who act from their feelings,

ings, have felt the full force of these truths. Hence the indifference they have ever shewn for all plans of reform which have been proposed, from conviction, that, under the influence of those laws of monopoly, no extension of the right of election could confer on them any real advantage.

*How much it is the Interest of the Rich to abolish those
Laws of Monopoly.*

If, in this summary of the destructive effects of those laws of monopoly, I have demonstrated that they are subversive of the industry and wealth of nations, of the laws of justice, of nature and of social happiness, and of the civil and political Rights of Man—in a word, if I have demonstrated that those laws are repugnant to the self-interests of Mankind, what being, endued with reasoning faculties, but must perceive the rottenness of the ground every institution and privilege which are supported by those laws must stand on? Who that must not be convinced of the infatuated folly of those men, who, on the brink of bankruptcy, after lavishing such oceans of blood, and such millions of wealth, in a vain attempt to support those laws, would not consent to their abolition, when they could have secured, to themselves and their families, such enviable conditions, with the thanks and esteem of their fellow-citizens? Who that does not perceive the want of
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intellect in those men who possess property, to which the people lay no claim, in allying their cause, and in placing their safety on the same footing with those men who live by corruption for betraying the rights and liberties of their country, and whose wages are paid with public money wrung from the hard hand of the peasant, in reward for their treasonable, parricidal service? Who does not see, that, from the perilous state to which the continuance of those laws had reduced property, imperious necessity called upon those who possessed it, to free it from all its restraints in descent, transfer, and sale; *whereby the numbers interested in its preservation would have been augmented, whilst the numbers interested in its subversion would have been diminished?* But, alas! so powerfully does the thirst for domineering even over the wretched, vitiate the mind which has once tasted its intoxicating spirit, to such a degree does it paralyze the reason, that, even in the jaws of death, the hand which has once grasped power, will hold it with a pertinacity not to be loosened. But if men will not close their eyes, and abandon their reason, can they avoid perceiving, that monopoly and usurpation have been undermined, by the revolution which has happened in the state of property and knowledge, arising from the arts, from education and commerce, which have made such rapid progress since the inventions of the mariner's compass and the press? can they be surprised, that,

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as these inventions were unknown and inoperative in the preceding ages of the world, nothing analogous to their effects should have appeared in the annals of mankind? If they doubt that these powerful and novel causes have produced this stupendous revolution, let them compare the present state of society, in which the great causes are exhibiting such important effects, with the barbarous ages from which these destructive laws of disinheritance, monopoly and slavery, originally sprung.

*A Comparison between the State of Society when those
Laws of Monopoly originated, and the present.*

See the rustic Baron, formerly inhabiting his Gothic Castle in the midst of his vassals, whose fidelity and service he purchases by bestowing the whole produce of his demesnes on their maintenance, and whose obedience he enforces by a constant residence amongst them—see this superintendant of slaves, this grazier of vassals, transformed at present into a fine gentleman residing in the capital, where he expends the whole of his income in selfish gratification and vanities amongst men from whom it procures him neither allegiance nor obedience. The vassals whose attachment was established by blending their interests with their lords are now transformed into tenants, with interests in direct opposition to that of their landlords,

lords, of whom they know little more than what they feel from the extortion of their agents or bailiffs—the one exacting the absolute disposal of the rights of the elector; the other desirous to enjoy it himself—the one endeavouring to gain the highest rents on the shortest tenure; the other as much interested in gaining the very reverse. But it is not in the total alteration which has taken place in this class only, that we are to look for the want of support which these laws at present experience. Those numerous, independent and enlightened classes, which have been introduced into society by the introduction of commerce, the arts, and the press, have been an entire addition;—classes who earn their livelihood, free, not only from all feudal dependencies, but even from the influence which the expectation of renewals, or the hopes of indulgence, create—artizans, neither knowing nor caring by whom the goods they have wrought for the factor may be bought or consumed; whereby, as the arts, manufactures and commerce advance, the numbers whose independence enables them, whose knowledge instructs them, whose self-interest impels them, to resist those laws of monopoly of property and power, must be augmented. See how commerce and the press have gained on despotism throughout the world, in an exact proportion as these great and operative causes have made their way in the several nations of the earth. See how exactly learning, industry,

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and commerce, have kept pace with liberty, in every quarter of the globe. See how these great benefactors of the human race, the compass and the press, have fitted mankind to comprehend and to promote their self-interest, in every country where they are known. Compare the ages which precede their invention, with the age in existence: Compare the scanty population composed of tyrants and vassals, plunged in the depths of ignorance, superstition and darkness; without one of the conveniences, and with but few of the necessities of life; without the press to print, and the post to circulate knowledge; without books, without industry, without emulation, incitement or collision; exhibiting a corruption of the savage state, without one of the advantages of civilization: Look back to this state of barbarism, ignorance, rapine, superstition and despotism, to whose legislative wisdom such solemn appeals are hourly made: Look back on those ancestors, to whose consummate ignorance of the principles of civil and political liberty you are indebted for those laws of monopoly—those laws which, by wresting the power of controul from the hands of the people, and vesting their rights and property in the hands of a few self-constituted legislators, have left lawless power at large to involve the nations of Europe in carnage, in famine, in blood, and in bankruptcy: Can it be matter for astonishment that such laws, from such an origin, should have caused such a complication of

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of disorders in a civilized state? If you have a doubt remaining, trace the gradual progress of the European mind from darkness to light, from thralldom to freedom: See it placing its self-interest in the strictest observance of passive obedience and non-resistance to a junto of priests and despots, from a faith and belief that the more entire the sacrifice of every right and every blessing in this world, the more certain the attainment of eternal happiness in the world to come: See it, from this lowest state of degradation, arrive at a sort of collision of sentiment from schisms, placing its self-interest in the success of one sect over another, between whom the most frivolous distinction created a difference: See this collision of sentiment advance to concerns of this world, in the contentions of factions and parties, where self-interest was placed in the triumph of one set of leaders over their rivals: See the public mind, hoping, from time to time, to promote its self-interest by a change of kings and ministers, and uniformly deceived by some wretched palliative, the peace-offering of men invested with power for professions made to attain it; until, enlightened by education, convinced by frequent and uniform experience that a change of men could never cure diseases which require a change of system, disengaged from all those false mediums which stood between it and its self-interest, and looking directly at the nature of government, the public mind has at

length arrived at the great truth, that as it is the nature of Man to abuse authority, the maintenance of Man's right should never depend on the will or even the virtue of those invested with power, but on the state of the independence and knowledge of the people, by whom, and for transacting whose affairs, they are chosen ; that without independence, the people cannot exercise a free and unbiased election, and that without knowledge they cannot judge how far the conduct of their delegates has entitled them to be re-elected or rejected. On these few truths must the rights of Mankind for ever depend. Take them, my countrymen ! into your bosoms ; let them sink deep into your hearts ; teach them to your children ; and trust me, that, when they are thoroughly rooted, no bayonet can force them, no corruption destroy them, no chains can bind them, no dungeon inclose them. Fortified with these truths, do not estimate the future progress of Liberty by the course she has run in the centuries past : But be assured, that the period has at length arrived, that after performing her slow and tedious passage through the regions of darkness, she quickens her pace as she approaches heat and light, and blazes on an enlightened and an astonished world.

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*That Liberty has gained ground in the present Contest,
and that she must be triumphant.*

When I consider the extraordinary efforts which have been made these last five years, to resist the abolition of these laws of monopoly of property and power in France, and to support the usurpation and corruption which depend on their continuance in every other country in Europe—when I see every restraint which stood between government and despotism removed—when I see the nations of Europe drained of their blood and of their wealth—when I see force, corruption and terror, exerted at every point, and in every direction, and that every influence has been employed to circulate misrepresentation, and to prevent the circulation of truth—I am not surprised to find that the appearances which have resulted from such extraordinary efforts should have betrayed those who love liberty into a fear that its progress had been arrested, or, that it should have elated the advocates for corruption to hope that usurpation and prostitution, by which they live in such affluence, were more firmly established than ever. But, true to those principles which I have already advanced, I hope to demonstrate that those appearances are but the effects of delusion, which can be but momentary, whilst those of principle must be eternal; and that what has appeared to
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be the destruction of liberty, is in fact the last effort of expiring corruption and despotism.

Tyranny, vassalage, and priestcraft, are the ingredients which originally composed the governments of the nations of Europe; and the disinheriting, monopolizing laws of primogeniture, entails and settlements, were the fundamental code by which despotism and slavery were established throughout. Whence, then, this stupendous revolution, whose novelty and magnitude have astonished the world? France, a prey to an intriguing, abandoned Court, a prey to an insolent, profligate and frivolous Aristocracy, a prey to a monstrous overgrown Clergy, the extremes of beggary and wealth—wretched under a complication of despotism: Whilst France, from having become more commercial, and, from a more extensive use of the press, having acquired more independence and knowledge than the other absolute despotisms of Europe, was prepared to make a revolution; and the extravagance and profligacy of its despotism, unrestrained by the controul of even the semblance of representation, brought on that bankruptcy which was the signal for its commencement; yes! France, goaded by the extravagance and insolence of this complication of tyranny on one side, and freed and enlightened by commerce and the press on the other, abolished those laws of monopoly of property and power, by which the pillars that supported usurpation and despotism have been destroyed,

stroyed, and a controuling representative Democracy has been raised on their site. This is the Revolution which those of depraved and vitiated souls, callous to the slavery of twenty-five millions of suffering people, but alive to the downfall of a vicious court and profligate courtiers, have reviled and vilified. This is the Revolution which those who prefer *lettres de cachet* to trial by Jury, and the gripe of rapacious despotism to the grants of delegated authority, have loaded with their invectives. This is the Revolution, which those who admire the *corvee*, the *taille*, the *gabelle*, the farm of tobacco, and the myriad of tyrannies it has abolished, have loaded with abuse. This is the Revolution at which those have railed, who regret the system of farmers-general, and the sanguinary code by which those leeches sucked the blood and wealth of industrious millions, to supply the waste and extravagance of rapacious despots. This is the Revolution against which infuriated Bigotry has vomited its rankest and foulest scurrilities, for having disbanded half a million of drones, who, living in idleness, exerted themselves to increase the days of idleness of others; wallowing part in filth and part in luxuries, and all an abomination to that creation, whose Creator they affected to glorify by consuming its growth, without adding a grain to its produce.

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This is the Revolution which the mass of the People of Europe behold with delight from a sympathy of feeling, that the abolition of those laws of monopoly could alone destroy that corruption, extravagance and usurpation, by which their several governments have reduced them to that state of distress from which the utmost exertions of industry cannot relieve them, and from conviction that the abolition of these laws only could create that democratic independence and consequence, by which their rights, their industry and their liberty could be secured. This is the Revolution which I intreat you will consider as nothing more, or nothing less, than the abolition of those laws of primogeniture, entails and settlements. For that this, and this only, was the Revolution of France, I will not only prove, but also, that the civil discord, the massacres, the famines, the carnage and bankruptcies, with which this Revolution has been attended, have been committed by that combination of corruption and despotism, which have been exerted, not only to destroy the Revolution, but to exterminate the People who made it.

The Revolution of France was nothing more than the Abolition of those Laws of Monopoly; and all the Calamity and Bloodshed with which it has been attended, were caused by those who conspired against it.

For more than three years, from May 1789 to August 1792, never did the world produce a Revolution which, for its magnitude, was of such unparalleled mildness: Never before was the subject of how Man may be best protected and governed, so freely, so ably discussed; and never was there so powerful a conspiracy formed, as that which was plotting, during this period, to contrive its destruction. It is time to unmask the real authors of those unparalleled crimes, which have brought such unexampled calamities upon the nations of Europe. Can it be denied, that the Minister of England, and his accomplices, have resorted to means long since exploded by civilized nations? Can it be denied, that he has expended millions of the wealth of Great-Britain, for the infernal purpose of spreading massacre, and famine, and anarchy, and civil commotion, in France? Was it not from the notoriety that these were his acts, that the People of France were forced to submit to those extraordinary means for suppressing intrigues and treasons? Was it not he who nurtured and fostered these treasons, intrigues, and civil commotions, which

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enabled Robespierre to establish his tyrannical power? If it cannot be denied that the Minister of England fomented and paid for those treasons, intrigues, and civil commotions; if it cannot be denied, that, without his aid and assistance, those intrigues, treasons, and civil commotions, could not have been practised; and if it cannot be denied, that, without these intrigues, treasons, and civil commotions, the People of France would not have been obliged to submit to a murderous tyrant, nor could the tyrant have had means to establish his power—who but the Minister of England, and his accomplices, are the real authors of the massacres, the carnage and anarchy which have resulted? Why, then, should he disown the miscreants of his begetting? Have they not proved themselves his faithful allies, by being the most dreadful scourge with which a people ever were fled, to the People of France? and have they not proved the most extraordinary support of his power with which a Minister was ever furnished? It is not to that sort of warfare practised by civilized nations, that he owed any advantages he gained, or any disadvantages his enemy suffered. No! the defeats of Dunkirk and Tournay, and the disgraces in, and flight out of Holland, shew how little his genius is fitted to succeed in a liberal, generous warfare. His genius lyes in fraud, deceit and cunning—dark, infernal and crooked. These are the qualities which have enabled him to create a hord of assassins in France,

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who drained that nation of more blood, and more millions, in two years, than could have been expended in ten campaigns of ordinary generous warfare. These are the qualities which enabled him to create that gang of assassins by whose hands he butchered some of the greatest genius that ever appeared. By these cursed assassins has he spread massacre, and carnage, and famine, and plunder, and anarchy and civil war, over the fairest portion of the creation. Why, then, disown these miscreants of his begetting? Was it not by means of these very assassins, that he not only deluged and desolated France, but that he deceived, deluded and terrified the People of England? Has he not made the terror of their crimes the means by which he terrified the nation to invest him with absolute power? Has not this terror been the means by which he has subjected the wealth of the British Empire, even to bankruptcy, at his disposal? Well may the suffering People of France call him the enemy of the human race; and well may the People of the British Empire, whose blood he has shed, whose wealth he has wasted, whose industry he has beggared, whose liberty he has destroyed, designate him by a like appellation. After he had laid Liberty prostrate from one extremity of France to the other, and after he had left her, as he imagined, expiring in agony under the myriads of wounds the assassins raised by his power had dealt her, he represented the tragedy in the British Empire, which, under his own auspices, had been really

acted in France. Transforming the characters, and practising such other deceptions as best suited his diabolical purpose, he announced it by proclamation. He represented Robespierre at the head of his gang of assassins, armed with reeking daggers, and besmeared with the blood of that Liberty they had butchered, whose fair form he made them assume. Under this foul and monstrous fraud, whilst horror had appalled every faculty of his spectators, he asked them, if that was the Liberty they wished to embrace? Every one that was weak, timid, ignorant, or credulous, was deceived. They instantly shrunk from Liberty, whose breath stunk in their nostrils like the fumes of the blood of the murdered; and they clung to Corruption, whose stench seemed the odour of regeneration and health. War, expence, despotic power, the destruction of industry, and national bankruptcy, were to be the means of salvation; whilst those who dared to speak of peace, retrenchment, œconomy, or reformation, were supposed to be in the fore-ground of guillotines with daggers in their hands, and to have had the hearts of assassins. The triumph of the Minister was complete over the inert, besotted mass of the people. He brought Liberty to be detested, and arbitrary power and corruption, under the appellation of confidence and strong government, to be adored.

Granting that the triumph of the British Minister over the interests and liberties of the People of
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Great Britain and Ireland, and over the senses of the privileged, the rich, the ignorant and the timid, has been complete—is there any thing in it which has the appearance of stability or permanence? Has it not been attained by corruption, by force, and delusion? Are not the means of force and corruption nearly exhausted? And how stands delusion? By deceiving the deluded into a belief, that the abolition of those laws of monopoly of property and power, was the cause of the anarchy, massacre and famine with which France was affected, and that their abolition in Great Britain and Ireland would be attended with similar consequences—the Minister derived that powerful support, by which he has endeavoured to re-establish those laws of monopoly in France, and by which he has resisted their abolition in England. But are not facts coming to light every hour, which develop the deceit he has practised? From the destruction of those assassins his power had raised, have not the wounds which Liberty received in France been visibly healing? Has not that Liberty which was said to have expired in France already reappeared? and has she not proclaimed to Europe the suborners and authors of her assassination? Is not the memory of those assassins universally odious in France, and are not the assistants and instruments of their slaughter and tyranny held in abhorrence? Since the abolition of those laws of monopoly, have not the Liberties of France gained strength

strength and security every hour, notwithstanding
 the infernal means which have been used to destroy
 them? Is it not a fact, that since the extirpation of
 the assassins, and that the treasons and massacres
 fomented and paid for by the British Minister
 have been got under, the Government of France
 has been one of the mildest that ever appeared?
 But if these facts will not convince the most besot-
 ted delusion, that the calamities, not only of
 France, but of Great Britain and Ireland, have been
 caused by this conspiracy, which, for these last
 five years, has lavished such oceans of blood, and
 such millions of wealth, to prevent the abolition of
 those laws of monopoly—let them look to our
 present condition, for confirmation? Is there an
 hour that we do not receive some fresh wound in
 our liberty, or in our credit? Are not our burdens
 multiplying, as our weakness and inability to bear
 them increases? Have not all the symptoms of
 approaching dissolution made their appearance?
 Has not the perilous aspect of our ruinous state
 banished our specie, and has not paper been used
 to replace it? Have not taxation and borrowing
 been exhausted, and are we not drained by a forced
 requisition, as unjust as capricious? In the name
 of Truth and of Justice, upon what pretence has this
 man and his accomplices set themselves up as the
 champions of liberty, of property, of religion and
 order, in this crusade against the abolition of those
 laws for the monopoly of property and power?
 What!

What ! is Virtue so impotent, that her cause should have lost ground every hour, though aided by the influence and power which arise from the collection and expenditure of twenty-two millions of annual revenue, with the additional influence and power which the borrowing and expenditure of two hundred millions in five years has furnished, with powerful fleets and numerous armies, with absolute power over the persons and properties of those who oppose him ? Or, is vice so prevalent over virtue, that our cause should gain ground during five years that such unparalleled tyranny has been used to defeat us, disarmed, without money, without any means of influencing whatever, but what we derive from an appeal to the understanding and reason ? And even in this our only recourse we labour under a thousand oppressions. The advocates for our opponents are loaded with riches, and what are falsely called honours ; their wretched productions are circulated, and their doctrines inculcated, by corruption and terror ; whilst the advocates on our side are persecuted, and their writings suppressed. Is it the nature of virtue to shrink from the light, or to fly from discussion ? Is it the nature of vice to court inquiry, and to appeal to investigation and truth ? On this alone would I rest the cause I contend for. On this alone would I contend that our's is the cause of virtue, and that our opponents' is the cause of vice. It were blasphemy against the Omnipotent : it were to invest vice with the all-powerful arm of virtue, and

to invest virtue with the impotence of vice : it were to accuse the Almighty of having established a government of hell upon earth : it were to suppose Satan omnipotent, and the Godhead gone. Yet it is on this blasphemous hypothesis that the abolition of those laws for the monopoly of property and power has been resisted. It is on this hypothesis, that those ruinous measures have been pursued for five years, for subverting, under pretence of supporting, the constitution. It is on this hypothesis, that the abolition of those laws of monopoly, and the continuance of the constitution, have been held incompatible one with the other. As these are the dogmas on which this fatal delusion has been established, by which we have been involved in this war of extermination with France, and in this smothered war which is ready to burst out in Great Britain and Ireland, they should be probed to the bottom.

Whether the Existence of our Constitution and Liberties are incompatible with the Abolition of those Laws of Monopoly.

BEFORE we had risked so desperate a stake as our all, in a war against Reformation, we should have diligently examined, and have been thoroughly convinced, that those deadly diseases with which the Constitution was said to be seized were not founded in truth. We should have endeavoured to reconcile the perfection of the constitution

tion in its actual state, which has been trumpeted through the nation, with the well-known aversion of mankind to alteration in government, as long as it is to be borne, and the violent inclination for change, which those extraordinary means have been used to suppress. At least, it must have been the height of infatuation and madness not to have ascertained that the constitution had not become so rotten, that whilst we were supporting it at the expence of millions of lives, and millions of money, it would not have fallen upon us, and buried the remnant under its ruins. But as the corruption and cowardice which have hitherto incapacitated and deterred us from looking the real condition of our political state in the face, will shortly be overcome by that imperious necessity, which dastardly and degenerate conduct will have occasioned in England, and tyranny and outrage in Ireland, no time should be lost in giving the subject the freest and most impartial discussion.

If the constitution, which it is said would be destroyed by the abolition of the laws for the monopoly of property and power, be the proprietorship of the National Representation principally in the Lords, by which it has become a mercantile commodity—if it consists in the Ministers of the Crown being invested with the most ample means of being its purchaser, whereby the grants of the public money are wholly in their power, as to quantity, appropriation and expenditure—if this be

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a correct description of the constitution, for the continuance of which we have been made to play so desperate a game, and the excellence of which we are discussing, I agree with the present Ministers, that there is no means so effectual as the abolition of those laws of monopoly, to effect its utter destruction. Yes! I am ready to grant that this is the definition of the constitution, for which we have bled, these last five years, at every pore. But is this the constitution for which so much blood was formerly shed in resisting the Stuarts? Is this the constitution of one thousand six hundred and eighty-eight? This is indeed the definition of the constitution which the Minister talks of supporting; in which he is backed and countersigned by the propriety of our National Representation, and the numerous tribes who live by the trade in a system of unmixed corruption. But I will appeal from such unsafe commentators to the history of the Constitution itself; where, instead of this consecrated fixture of abuses which have been accumulating since the Revolution, it will be found, in its true definition, to be composed of a collection of rights, taken, in the course of centuries, from the repository of Aristocratical and Monarchical Usurpation and Despotism, where they had been stored in times of ignorance and barbarism, and from whence they have been drawn from time to time, as the growing knowledge and the growing necessities of the people

ple have made them sensible they were wanting for their further prosperity and happiness—not donations flowing from Aristocracy and Monarchy, but obtained by the power enjoyed and exercised by the National Representatives, of granting the People's money, and of exacting a rigid account of its expenditure. And, so far from the present proprietorship of the Lords or of individuals, or the present venal dependency on the Crown—so far from that confidence now so extensively called for, and so extensively given, making any part of the Constitution, it will be found that a total disconnection between the Crown and the Commons, and between the Lords and the Commons, together with a never-ceasing distrust and jealousy of both Crown and Lords on the part of the Commons, was the *vital principle* by which the Constitution was *originally generated, afterwards nurtured, and finally established at the Revolution*. Yes! after centuries of struggle between the National Representation and the Crown, in which many Kings were deposed and one was beheaded, the Constitution was at length established on the sole investiture of the public purse in the hands of the Democracy's Delegates; and so thoroughly was this vital principle established upon the restoration of Monarchy in the person of Charles II. that James was deposed for attempting to infringe it, and his successor chosen on the express condition, that the then esta-

blished rights of the National Representation should be the limitation by which the Crown should be worn. If, then, it cannot be denied, that the Constitution consists in the Representatives of the People *actually* exercising these restraints and limitations, with an *actual* disconnection, distrust and jealousy existing between them, the Crown, its Ministers, and the Lords—if it cannot be denied, that it was by the exercise of these powers that whatever liberty the Constitution has ever contained, was gained and can be secured--- I ask, where is the difference between the acts of the Stuarts, who attempted to lay aside the Representative Democracy altogether by arbitrary power, and the act of the Minister of the Crown, who *corrupts the National Representation, buys it up, avails himself of its sanction for laws subversive of the Liberties of the People, and shelters his acts under its name*? I ask, is the destruction of the Constitution less real in the one case than in the other? Is Corruption less deadly than absolute force? Force acts openly, and provokes to resistance by the pain it inflicts. But Corruption is mixed with our food; it is swallowed with our nutrition; and it is not sensibly felt until it has seized on the vitals. Force obliges us for a time to submit; but Corruption renders us unfit for resistance.

Such is the violence of the passions of Man, once invested with government, for unlimited authority,

authority—such his desire to free himself from necessary controul, that from the day the executive power was lodged in the hands of James's successor, on the express condition that it should be, for ever after, limited by the then acknowledged rights of the Representative Democracy—from that day the Ministers of the Crown commenced a systematic plan for corrupting that body, whose power the fate of the Stuarts convinced them it was no longer safe openly or directly to infringe. They preserved the form and the names of the Constitution; but they destroyed its vital principle. They poisoned the trustee of the liberties of the Nation, and signed a surrender of his functions to themselves, with the lifeless hand of the putrid body they had murdered. The present Minister, once the foremost and the loudest in inveighing against this assassination of the Constitution, after shedding more blood, lavishing more wealth, and extending corruption farther, than any of his predecessors, in support of his power—finding that even these horrid and ruinous means were insufficient to support his tottering system, he has had recourse to the same lifeless hand to sanction that arbitrary power which had been put down at the Revolution, and which Corruption was called in to replace; by which means, at this instant, the Constitution is not only assailed by Corruption, but by arbitrary power and military force.

Thus,

Thus, although I have proved that these pretended champions of the constitution are its real destroyers, although it is manifest to the meanest capacity that the abolition of these laws of monopoly is the only efficacious means of restoring and securing the independence of the national representation, and that vital principle of its disconnection, distrust and jealousy of the executive power—it has been said it would destroy the Lords, and with them the Monarchy also. This is a serious assertion, and demands your most attentive examination, because it carries the appearance of truth.

That it is not the Abolition of those Laws of Monopoly which has destroyed Hereditary Power.

To explain this fully, I must refer to those principles upon which I have hitherto reasoned, “that self-interest is the governing principle in every institution that is human, and that property is the engine by which self-interest is worked.” To judge of the question, as it concerns the Lords, by this principle, we must compare their present situation with the situation they formerly held; and it will be found, that if they cannot hold their place in the constitution as a separate branch in the Legislature, it will be owing to that great Revolution in property and in mind which
has

has actually happened. Regarding the Lords in their ancient state, as the sole proprietors of the lands of the nation, those who imagine that the powers vested in them as a branch of the Legislature were privileges in addition to those which their situation as the sole landed proprietors gave them, must be grossly deficient in political science. In their all-powerful state as sole proprietors of the lands of the nation, at a time when lands were almost the only species of property, to define, was to limit their power. But to take the power over the national purse out of their hands, and to place it in those of the national representation, was a restriction which at once disabled this powerful Aristocracy from destroying the liberties of the people. It was this restriction which created the Constitution and Liberties of England and Ireland; and it is by the actual existence of this restriction only that they can be preserved.

In a state where lands are almost the only species of property, where they are in the possession of but a few, and where the monopoly is supported by laws so destructive of human prosperity and happiness as the laws of primogeniture, entails and settlements, the forming these great land proprietors into a distinct branch of the Legislature, and investing them with those powers *only* with which by the constitution the Lords are invested, was one of the happiest devices of human invention, which, under *such circumstances*, none but an enemy to liberty

liberty would attempt to destroy. But when, from the introduction of luxuries and vanities, those great proprietors have been tempted to part with their lands—when, by the * various evasions of these laws of monopoly, they have been enabled to do so—when, instead of being the sole proprietors, they do not possess the hundredth part of the lands of the nation—and when, from the vast influx of capital, and what is called personal property, triple the value of the fee-simple of all the lands taken together, those once sole proprietors do not possess the thousandth part of the whole national property—can the mind of Man conceive a greater absurdity, than that such a monstrous revolution in the national property must not be followed by a vast and important change in the state of the Lords as a branch of the Legislature? Is it in the nature of things that the Lords as sole proprietors *in their former condition*, and the Lords not possessed of the thousandth part of the national property *in their present condition*, can have the same power in the one case as in the other? As long as the Lords were the great and powerful barons, they could maintain their situation with ease, by resting upon their own strength as proprietors. As long as the Crown was possessed of its extensive demesnes, and dared to exercise despotic power, so averse is Man to condescend to use any other means as long as he

* The Laws passed in the Reign of Henry VII. and the evasions of Fines and Recoveries.

he dares to use force, that both the Crown and the Lords abstained from corrupting the delegates of the Democracy. But, now that, from the astonishing progress which the nations of Europe have made, Democracy has become so almighty, the Crown and the Lords have seized on the national representation, the one as proprietor, the other as a seven year's renter ; whilst the Minister, as agent for both, receives the public money from the proprietary for the Crown in one hand, and pays it back to the proprietary with the other. Thus the Minister of the Crown, and the Lords, who make a property of the national representation, after actually destroying the constitution, are the loudest to trumpet its excellence, and to deluge the world with blood to support its subversion ; and, as it fares with the feet of the women of China, they have so squeezed the representative basis in the vice of monopoly, that as the other parts have grown, the constitution is unable to stand : And after exhausting the sources of blood and of wealth, they may now learn, that, instead of fighting against French principles and French revolution, they have been contending against European principles and European revolution : they may learn, that, instead of hemming them in within the territories of France with the bayonets of mercenaries, extirpating them by famine, or making them a prey to civil discord and massacre, they will find them planted at home ; they will find that the increase of commerce, the

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progress

progress of knowledge, the influx of wealth, and this great revolution in property—in a word, they will find that the gigantic growth of Democracy has totally subverted those ancient relations between the parts of the constitution by which it was formerly balanced, that this Colossian Democracy, before which hereditary Aristocracy has dwindled, *must have a real representation*, and that the means which they have pursued, and are still pursuing, to defeat it in France, *are the most efficacious and rapid to promote its progress at home.*

If this reasoning stand in need of further proof to convince you, that by this great revolution which has actually happened in the national property and in the national mind, the Lords have been disabled from holding that place, as a branch of the Legislature, which the constitution assigns them, and that they exist solely by their proprietorship of the Democracy's representation, I might appeal to the writings of the most able, entire and furious opponent * of those principles I have supported, who gives a decided opinion that the Lords could not exist one year, without their proprietorship in the Commons, and their sale to the Crown ; or, in other words, that they would not exist a single year,

* “ They know that the House of Lords is supported only by its *connections* with the Crown and with the House of Commons ; and that, without this double connection, the Lords could not exist a single year.”

BURKE'S Letter to the Duke of PORTLAND, p. 70.

year, without their usurped right of destroying the vital and fundamental part of the constitution. And this authority is farther confirmed by the present Minister's being forced, in order to support his tottering system, to make more Lords *in the same proprietary line*, within these last twelve years, than had been created for the century which precedes his accession.

Since, then, this great revolution in the national property has caused such a vast revolution in the state of the Lords, that those laws for the monopoly of property and power are insufficient to support them in that situation which the constitution allots them, the only question which remains for discussion (if it is not treason against the constitution to discuss such a question) is, whether those laws of monopoly shall be continued, to support the utter subversion of the vital principle of the constitution, by supporting the proprietorship of the Lords in the Commons? But if any one can be found barefaced and hardy enough to contend for the continuance of those laws of monopoly, for the purpose of supporting the subversion of the People's great constitutional, imprescriptible right of being represented—although I might here close this part of my subject, from having brought home the subversion of the constitution to the Ministers of the Crown, and the Lords—although I might content myself with having demonstrated, that in this struggle between Aristocracy

crocy and Democracy, the former, after being forced from their own place in the constitution by the great revolution in human affairs, have seized on the place which this great revolution has allotted the latter—although I might content myself with having demonstrated, that the people who are charged with innovation, are only trying to regain their ancient constitutional, imprescriptible rights, whilst the Aristocracy which advances the charge, after being driven from their ancient condition by the inflexible order of nature, are themselves the real innovators, and the real usurpers;—yet so strong do I find myself on this great constitutional question, that I will discuss it still farther, even with those who contend that these laws of monopoly should be continued, to support the proprietorship of the Lords in the Commons.

Whether the great Revolution in Property has not so effectually destroyed the Constitutional Power of the Lords, that neither these Laws of Monopoly, nor their Proprietorship, can longer uphold them?

WERE I not furnished with arguments against this proprietorship the most conclusive, I might assert, that if it is necessary to continue these laws of monopoly, for the sole purpose of supporting this proprietorship of the national representation, the system of proprietorship must stand charged with all the evils with which I have already shewn
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the continuance of these laws is attended—the deterioration of agriculture—the diverting the sacred funds of industry from reproduction, to channels of waste, extravagance and folly, in which there is no reproduction whatever—the blighting political œconomy, in all its branches and ramifications—the extending the extremes of poverty and wealth to the injury of morals and of social happiness—the destruction of the laws of nature and justice, whereby the younger children of the rich are brought up to a state of dependence which prepares them for prostitution; but, above all, the destruction of civil and political liberty, by generating the few with dispositions and means to influence, bribe and debauch the constituent body, and by reducing the constituent body to that state of dependence and poverty which renders it liable to be influenced, bribed and debauched. But this proprietary system contains vices, inherent in its nature, so destructive and fatal, that I will not dwell on any which are not purely its own. Indeed, I shall confine myself to one, and that no less conclusive than *that it not only contains the seeds of its own dissolution within its own bosom, but that the time of that dissolution, accelerated by the ignorance and wickedness of the present Ministers, is already accomplished.*

That

That the Proprietary System is a Suicide.

BEGINNING at the Revolution, when this system of proprietorship of the national representation, and the consequent corruption, had had their commencement, and taking the century which has intervened as a fair experiment of their nature and working, it will be found that they have advanced to dissolution and bankruptcy, at an *accelerated pace in geometrical measure*, as appears from this plain statement of facts—

At the Revolution England owed nothing 00,000,000 00,000,000
DURING

9 years, from 1688, to 1697, Debt contracted,		21,515,742
5 years, from 1697, to 1702, Debt paid off,	5,121,041	
20 years, from 1702, to 1722, Debt contracted,		37,286,375
17 years, from 1722, to 1739, Debt paid off,	8,328,354	
9 years, from 1739, to 1748, Debt contracted,		31,338,689
7 years, from 1748, to 1755, Debt paid off,	6,003,640	
8 years, from 1755, to 1763, Debt contracted,		74,526,509
11 years, from 1763, to 1774, Debt paid off,	10,415,474	
8 years, from 1775, to 1783, Debt contracted,		137,608,881
10 years, from 1783, to 1793, Debt paid off,	7,330,000	
6 years, from 1793, to 1798, Debt contracted,		242,660,308
Total Debt contracted, from 1688, to 1798,		564,936,514
Total of what Debt has been paid from 1688, to		
1798	37,198,509	
Balance of Debt contracted from 1688, to 1798,		527,738,005

It will be found, by referring to the history of the period in question, that every succeeding Minister came into power, under a promise on his part, and a most fervent hope and desire on the part

part of the nation, that œconomy and retrenchment should arrest the fatal career—but that so congenial is extravagance, so inevitable is bankruptcy and ruin to this system of proprietorship and corruption, that, under the various changes of Ministers, every one of them has departed, leaving irrefutable proof that this destructive principle was attached to the system, and that it was not to be cured by the man; until at length the period has arrived, when, although the Minister were to stop his accursed career, the system has received momentum enough to precipitate it into the gulph of perdition: For, granting that the Minister could make peace this instant, and that he could close the account of the war with having expended but one hundred and fifty millions sterling of the national capital, and granting the employments from which it was taken to have yielded but ten per cent. profit, he has reduced the national income fifteen millions a year. Let me then ask, if, before the war, when the national income was fifteen millions more than it is at present, he could extort but ~~fin-~~
*fif*teen millions of annual revenue, and that, after a ten year's peace, and after he had found out those mediums of taxation at which duties prove most productive—how is it possible he should be able to extort thirty millions of annual revenue out of the national income, after it had undergone sixteen millions reduction? I ask, if liberty has bent
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under the influence which the collection and expenditure of sixteen millions created before the commencement of this war, how shall liberty be able to exist under the influence which arises from the collection and expenditure of thirty millions, supposing for an instant that such a monstrous burden could be endured? And if this vast influence must inevitably crush the liberty of Britain, how is it possible that a nation bereft of its freedom could continue to bear such a burden?

That the Measures which the Minister has taken to prevent the Revolution, have proved the most efficacious and rapid to hasten it.

ALTHOUGH these numerous facts cannot be refuted, yet there are others of such weight in proving that the Minister and his accomplices have accelerated the destruction of the system they boast of supporting, that I cannot omit them. The Minister has repeatedly boasted that he has destroyed the national capital of France. That he should make it a matter of triumph, affords one proof more of that ignorance by which he has ruined the empire, and of his incapacity for the station he holds. If it cannot be denied that capital, like fluid, will find its own level amongst the neighbouring countries—if it cannot be denied that the profits of capital are highest in those countries where it is most scarce, and lowest where

where it is the most plenty—I ask this Minister, where is his subject for triumph if he cannot prevent the capital of England from flowing into France, to fill up the place of that capital he plumes himself upon having exhausted? If it cannot be denied, that the profits of capital in France must have risen in an exact proportion as he has diminished the capital itself, by what means can he prevent the capitalists of England from sending their capital from Britain where its profits are lowest, to employ it in France where profits are highest? Yes! he may boast of having destroyed the whole capital of France; but if he cannot prevent the chasm from being instantly filled up by a current of capital from every other quarter of the commercial world, and more from England than from any other nation in Europe, where is his subject for triumph? Is it not manifest that the relative situation of England and France, will be totally different at the end of this war, from their relative situation at any former period since their existence as nations? When we consider that the commerce and industry of France, from having laboured under a complication of oppressions and difficulties, will have become freer than the commerce and industry of any other commercial nation—when we consider that the commerce of France, from being held in dishonour, has become highly respected—who is so blind as not to perceive that France, with all these disadvantages

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on her side, must attract the capital and the artizans of Great Britain? If it is fact, that the present revolution in Europe has been caused by those laws of monopoly having confined property to fewer hands than it otherwise would be, and that no nation can arrive at tranquillity until property has become so divided, that those who possess it shall be sufficiently numerous to insure its protection—if the property of France is much more divided than that of Great Britain, and if the abolition of the laws of monopoly in the one country, whilst they are retained in the other, must make this division of property much greater in France—is it not manifest that France will be every day approaching nearer to a state of repose and security, whilst England will be every day drawing nearer and nearer to a Revolution? In such a dilemma, will the lands of England continue to sell at thirty years' purchase, when the lands of Belgium and France are selling at eight? Will men detain their capital in England at ten, or even at fifteen per cent. profit, when they can get five-and-twenty or thirty per cent. profit in France? Will men let their property or their earnings, be they of what sort they may, remain in England, to have them eat up, not only by the most exorbitant taxes with which property or industry ever were burdened, but by requisitions exacted by a retrospect as unequal as unjust? Thus, it is manifest, the Minister

nister and his accomplices have not only dissipated the capital of Great Britain and Ireland by the expences of this war, which may be called purely their own, but that they must be drained of the remnant which after the war he may have left them, to supply his boasted exhaustion of France. I ask, what becomes of the British Empire when her capital shall have been expended or transferred? Can she retain her commerce or her manufactures after her national capital has vanished? Can she maintain her navy after her capital and commerce are gone? Or what is to become of this monstrous system, which depends on the present monstrous debt? Let the Minister and his accomplices come forward and stand on their defence. Let those who have been so general and so loud in their accusations against the people, "of subverting the constitution," acquit themselves from the charge of being its most rapid, tyrannic and bloody destroyers. Let those men who have accused the people of plotting the destruction of the nation's prosperity, acquit themselves of the charge of having brought the whole British Empire to bankruptcy and dissolution. When this man and his accomplices insult the people by calling them Jacobins, and when they talk of Jacobins making revolutions, can they deny that this great influx of wealth has actually happened from the progress of commerce, and the improvement in the mechanic powers? Can they deny that this great

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revolution in property from which I have reasoned has taken place? Can they deny that the European mind has undergone a change whereby the most inveterate prejudices and the most confirmed habits of thinking have been wholly eradicated? Can they deny that this vast revolution in property and in mind, must occasion a great revolution in government and in political power? Let us at length arouse from our delusion, and make use of our reason. Let us examine what have *the people* to be alarmed at, what have *they* to regret, in this great revolution. Is it because the increase of commerce, and the improvements in the mechanic powers, have occasioned this vast influx of necessaries and conveniences for human use, that *the people* should be alarmed, that the *people* should have to regret? Is it that new and independent classes have been introduced into society, or that the invention of the Press has diffused general knowledge, and taught a general sense of the rights of mankind—that the *people* should have to regret? If these are the real ingredients of this vast revolution which has made its appearance in the European world, what becomes of the charges against these wonder-working Jacobins? If these are the great and powerful causes which have shaken old and inveterate prejudices of barbarous ages, why the jargon that Jacobins are the revolutionists? If those powerful causes are as great and as operative in Great Britain

tain and Ireland as in France, why call them French principles? If this great revolution in property and in mind be the real cause of this revolution in Europe, why confine it to France? Has not this revolution in property, and have not these wonderful effects of the Press, taken place in Great Britain and Ireland? Why should they not operate in the one as well as in the other? Or, are the people to be deluded by names? Are they to be taken in with the cant and jargon of "good old principles," at a time when every good principle has fallen a prey to usurpation, corruption and despotic power, and that every slavish and tyrannic principle has been made to replace them? In the name of Heaven, where will the insolence of this man and his accomplices end? Contrast the conduct and views of the People with the Minister's acts. The People claim the restitution of that real representation, which ever has, and ever must form, the only basis upon which, not only the constitution and liberties of Britain and Ireland can rest, but that upon which only the Liberties of Mankind can be supported. Yet for this have the Minister and his accomplices reviled them as Jacobins. It is not this vast revolution, and influx of wealth and knowledge, that should alarm the people, or that they should regret. No! It is their blood and their wealth, which have been lavished to oppose and counteract this revolution, that they should regret. It is their blood
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and their wealth, which have been expended to support those accursed laws of monopoly, the propriety of their national representation, and the consequent corruption which has paralyzed every member of their political frame, that they have to regret. It is the erecting of barracks, the repeal of the Habeas Corpus, the setting at nought the trial by Jury, the issue of blank *lettres de cachet*; the substitution of the Bastille, whose bolts no longer obey the mandates of law; the introduction of torture; the clogging the freedom of the Press, that boast of the constitution, with enormous imposts, afterwards sickening it by corruption, and finally destroying it by military force; the crowding the galleys with thousands without any trial whatever; the consuming whole districts by fire at the discretion of an incited military, the robbery and destruction of property; the murders which have been perpetrated, in contempt of all law, on those against whom there was a suspicion of being suspected; the blasting confidence between man and man, and corrupting the public mind, by creating a system of spies and informers; the destruction by law of almost the entire right of discussion, and its total annihilation by a "vigour beyond the law;" the converting the national representation into a chamber for registering his requisitions and edicts; by expending,

In 1793,	-	-	5,622,272
1794,	-	-	10,485,548

In

In 1795, - - 15,468,295

1796, - - * 17,885,218

without the grant, consent, or knowlege of Parliament, and by sending 1,200,000l. out of the kingdom while Parliament sat, without deigning to inform them of it—These daring violations of their dearest rights have indeed alarmed the people; these, they have sorely regretted. Can any one acquainted with the constitution recognise one of its features in these deeds of the Minister? Is it possible that a constitution which contained so many of the purest principles of Liberty, could require all those means of the rankest tyranny and despotism to uphold it? I put it to any reflecting mind, whether it can discover, in this system of the Minister and his accomplices, one single resuscitating principle by which it can be rescued from ruin? Can it discover the smallest crevice through which external peace or internal security can enter?—whether, after five years of the most violent means, symptoms have not grown more deadly every hour? Senseless man! and senseless herd who follow in your train! Do you not perceive that all your efforts have been vain, to support this system of proprietorship and corruption? Do you not perceive that it carries in its own bosom

* It is strange to observe how utterly this Minister despises the House of Commons. In 1796 he expended, without the previous consent of Parliament, 2,932,532l. more, than he expended with their consent.

bosom the seeds of its dissolution? Do you not perceive that your victories are but as the cordial draughts to the consumptive subject, which animate for the moment, but are instantly succeeded by the collapse which denotes confirmed ulcers and confirmed decay? Do you not perceive, that by the great and inexorable order of nature, society has arrived at that period in which Hereditary Aristocracy and Representative Democracy cannot exist together, and that you cannot establish the former, unless you destroy that great revolution which has taken place in property and in mind, that has erected and greatened the latter? You must destroy commerce, and its influx of wealth. You must destroy machinery, its abridgements of labour, and its influx of the necessaries and conveniences of life. You must destroy, not only the press, not only every book in existence, but you must destroy the actual mind of the world. Then, and not until then, hereditary usurpation and despotism may rule and lord it over ignorance, superstition, misery and vassalage. But if you will have the wealth, independence and knowledge, which the inventions of the compass, the press, and the improvements in the mechanical powers, have brought into the world, you may be assured, that the gigantic Democracy which they have created *must have a real, efficient, controuling representation.*

If, in the infancy of the constitution, when the the finances of the whole nation were not equal to the
taxes

taxes of a single parish at present, the national representation was composed of honest, faithful guardians of the national purse—if the people suffered, suffering with them—if the people were plundered, having no share in the spoil—how, when the nation has hundreds of millions to manage, shall the entire be left at the mercy of the Minister of the Crown, invested with unbounded means of corrupting, and a proprietary with every disposition and interest to be corrupted? Or, taking the last hundred years for a test of its working, is it within the scope of physical possibility, that such a system, under such temptation to ruin and bankruptcy, can avoid dissolution? No doubt, if wisdom had directed the councils, the hereditary and proprietary system might have been longer continued. But the Minister, instead of repairing or propping the ancient and tottering fabric, has, by overloading the upper parts, and undermining its foundation, prepared it to fall by the storm his wickedness and folly have gathered. It stands like some ancient ruin, once the temple of the gods, but now a den where midnight robbers divide their spoil. Its columns mutilated, its arches broken, it holds together by the ancient cement of its mortar, and the creeping weeds which conceal the beauties of its simple features, until at length the vermin, nestling at its base, having undermined the whole, it waits but for the equinoctial blast sent to equalise

the unequal elements, to strike the ancient fabric to the earth, never, never to be imitated by human art. If this is the state to which this man and his accomplices have reduced us, why not employ the few moments which are left us to meet the storm? Why not snatch our fate from the hands of these men, who have hurried us to the brink of ruin? Why not collect whatever talent, experience and virtue can be found in the nation, and, by one bold, decided effort, rescue ourselves from the confusion, calamity and horror of a revolutionary contest?

It may perhaps be objected, that I have digressed from discussing the state of Ireland, to discuss the state of Great Britain. But when it became a question how far the constitution had been impaired, how much of it remained in existence, whether it be possible to renovate it, or whether it is not on the verge of such utter destruction that it must be built up anew—I thought it fairer to examine it in Great Britain, where some remnants existed, than in Ireland alone, where not a vestige remained. Besides, the system of corruption and military force which have been substituted in the place of that part of the constitution of which we once were possessed, is so wholly in the power of the British Minister, that to ascertain the stability or permanence of the system which has been adopted in Ireland, it was absolutely necessary to ascertain the stability or permanence of the system which

which has been adopted in Great Britain; and having done so, I will conclude the account of our political state.

Effects of the French Revolution on the Irish Mind.

Much as the European mind has been advanced, widely as political knowledge has been diffused, and considerably as inveterate prejudices have been destroyed, by the collision of sentiment which the Revolution of France has occasioned; in no country in Europe has it produced more important effects than in our own. Before this great epoch, an opinion had been generally accredited among the Protestants of Ireland, that Catholics were incapable of either claiming or possessing civil or political freedom; that passive obedience, non-resistance, and a belief that the sacrifice of the Rights of Man in this world, as the only means of attaining eternal happiness in the world to come, are principal tenets of Catholic faith; and, like the slave-drivers in the West Indies, the Irish Protestants, after lashing their Catholic countrymen into a mental torpor, set up the debasement caused by their own tyranny as an eternal barrier against Catholic freedom. For the honour of human nature, for the honour of the British character, it were to be wished that a veil could be thrown over the rapine and tyranny which the History of Ireland displays from the first landing of the English

adventurers in 1169, until the American War. But it affords too dearly bought an example of what a six hundred years of oppression, debasement and tyranny, *one united effort* to destroy foreign usurpation would have prevented, for the Friends of Liberty to wish to have the recital suppressed. For the present, I shall only observe, that the Revolution of 1688, which in England was a triumph of liberty over bigotry and despotism, was in Ireland a Revolution from a system of predatory warfare and tyranny against persons, opinions and property, to a more orderly and legalized system of national debasement and plunder. We lay prostrate, despicable, and overwhelmed with wretchedness, until a spark of liberty struck from the American contest, grew into a flame strong enough to melt the visible chains with which Great Britain had bound us, but too weak to reach those secret bonds by which a few factions of the most contemptible traitors delivered the great and essential rights of their country into the hands of foreign agents, for which they were rewarded with the wreck and remnant to be scrambled for by the most shameless, abject, hungry crew, that ever sold themselves to another country, or that ever betrayed their own. An attempt, indeed, was made to destroy them; but it was the effort of contracted bigotry, and served but to expose its impotence.

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At the instant it meditated the destruction of one usurpation, it sought to set up another, under the wicked and foolish project of establishing the liberties of one million upon the slavery of three millions. But when France, containing 25,000,000 of Catholics, more the capital of the Catholic Religion than even Rome—when France, the country where the Catholic Clergy of Ireland were principally educated, and where the plundered and persecuted Irish Catholics had for centuries found an asylum—when this great Catholic nation established her liberties on the ruin of religious and political thralldom; the Protestants of Ireland were convinced that no particular religion, in this enlightened state of the European world, was incompatible with political freedom; whilst the spirit and ability with which the Catholics of Ireland demanded their liberties, was an unerring proof in the eyes of their Protestant countrymen that they were entitled to gain them. Thus the erroneous opinion on which our divisions and weakness were founded, was destroyed by the Revolution of France; and the bigotry and tyranny by which our island has been debased and degraded for six hundred years in the eyes of the world, has been eradicated from the minds of the people. The banns have been indissolubly solemnized, and THE INFANT LIBERTIES OF IRELAND MUST BE THE FRUITS OF THEIR UNION. From this period, a period the most auspicious for Ireland,

land, religious concerns have been consigned to their proper place, between the individual and his God, to whom alone they belong. From this period, the only difference existing among us has been between the nation which demands her rights and a few traitors who usurp and withhold them. The history of the contest is too recent, and too deeply engraved on your feelings, to require to be minutely detailed. You have marked the insolence with which the infant voice of Catholic Liberty was spurned by usurpation and bigotry. You observed the same voice afterward, in a higher key, and a more peremptory tone, strike upon the fears or the convenience of the British Minister; and it is of little consequence to inquire, whether it reverberated on the venality of an Irish Parliament, or on its impotence to resist the mandate of a British Minister, or on both—It is enough to mark, that the same men who so insolently spurned the modest claims of the Catholics of Ireland to a part of their rights, and pledged their lives and fortunes to resist them for ever, in the same breath, at the mandate of the British Minister, conceded, with a meanness in perfect conformity with their former insolence, these very rights they had sworn never to yield. You have seen the national union advancing with increasing vigour and spirit, from the attainment of a part of their rights, to a bold and manly demand of them all.

all. You saw the propriety of your national representation capitulate, and make a virtual acknowledgment of their usurpation. You saw the tribe of borough-mongers, whose lives have been spent in the basest venality, prostitution and treason, attend the House of Commons with plans of reform. You saw the most bigoted usurpers anxious to atone for former persecution, by the most ardent professions in favour of Catholic freedom. The Protestant mind was elated with the prospect of immediate Reform, or rather restoration of the national representation. The Catholic mind was cheered with the prospect of being instantly raised from the degradation of proscription to the rights of the Citizen—In a word, the whole Irish mind was wound up to the highest state of ardent expectation, that their rights and liberties would be peaceably conceded by those who usurped them. Why have these fond hopes been raised? Why have they been insultingly blasted?

The British Minister, perceiving that his apostasy from every profession and principle which recommended him to public confidence---perceiving that the blood he had wickedly lavished, the millions he had mischievously squandered, and the liberty he had daringly violated, was beginning to weaken his power---he foresaw how necessary it was to detach all those who could be seduced from the opposite party, that the impracticability of
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forming an efficient Ministry may enable him to live out the corrupt and ruinous system he had so greatly promoted. In this provident scheme, Ireland was thrown into the scale as a mere make-weight, to balance the portion of plunder by which the Portland faction was to be bought; and, that it might be made worth an acceptance, the most universally execrated Irish factions were dismissed, to make room for the most popular Parliamentary characters; the old measures were to be abandoned, and new ones adopted. But as soon as the British Minister had reduced his new allies to such a state that he could safely insult them—as soon as he rendered them contemptible in office, and even more contemptible, because more insignificant, should they resign it—by means of those indefinite equivocal terms he can so adroitly employ, he re-seized on Ireland, and reinstated his minions. Thus, with unparalleled chicane and villany, that he may prop his tottering power, he raised the most sanguine hopes of the nation, that those essential rights of the constitution would be conceded, to which they had every claim which faith, justice, and long and patient sufferings, could warrant. Yet, to answer his own personal views, has this man outraged every feeling which could agitate the mind or interest the heart of a gallant and generous people. Instead of pouring balm on the wounds he inflicted, he has poured in British troops and British millions, to support the execrable

crable factions he so lately abandoned, that, in the plenitude of their power, they may wreak their vengeance on the nation, for the joy with which it had celebrated their former dismissal. At the very instant that a Colossean power, combining a population of * fifty millions, with all the fire and enterprize of Republican ardour, threatens the annihilation of the British Empire, regardless of every consideration but his own aggrandizement, he has eradicated with fire and sword that affection for British connection from the hearts of the Irish, which policy would have nurtured in the minds of the Catholics, and which nothing but the most wanton and barbarous tyranny could have torn from the breasts of the dissenters. What stronger proof can be adduced that the constitution has been destroyed, than that one man should thus sport with the dearest interests of one country, and with a connection invaluable to the other? Let us examine upon what ground he stands to violate the dearest rights, and to outrage the feelings of the Irish nation, to a degree which no despot in Europe, at the close of the eighteenth century, durst venture with the most abject of his vassals. Let us analyze the ingredients with which this charlatan has quacked, poisoned, and tortured our political frame. I ask, is it not a fact that Lord Shannon has made a private property of the power of returning thirteen

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members

* Holland, Italy, &c.

members to *legislate* in our national representation? Has not Lord Ely possessed himself of the same power of returning nine? Lord Downshire, eight? The Beresford faction, eight? Lord Abercorn, seven? Lord Kingston, seven? Lord Londonderry, five? Lord Caledon, four? The La Touches, seven? Bruen, six? Foster, five? To abridge this odious detail, I ask, is it not a fact that thirty men, principally Lords, have possessed themselves of the absolute power of returning a decided majority of that assembly, which, by *the constitution, should be the real representation of the whole people of Ireland?* I ask, is it not a fact, that these thirty men have an account, debit and credit, with the agent of the British Minister, where, in the rankest and foulest treason, they make an unlimited transfer, by the agency and suffrage of their spurious bastard delegates, of the blood and wealth of the Irish nation, not only to support a war, in which she has no concern, nor can derive any possible benefit, but to pay for that treason which destroys her liberty, her markets, her manufactures and commerce beside? I ask, is it not a fact that, to reward this diabolical treason, our beauteous island has been parcelled out amongst these thirty men into districts, sized and apportioned to the number and weight of the delegates with which each stands credited in the ledger of usurpation and treason? Is it not a fact that in these districts, these farmers—
general

general of our rights have the appointment of officers of revenue, licensed extortioners on the foreign trade of the nation, throughout our harbours and sea-ports, excise officers to sweep the inland, sheriffs and grand jurors to rob on the highways, even converting the vestments of a Christian ministry into a pall to cover prostitution, and the ermine of justice into a cloak for corruption? Is it not a fact, that for betraying the rights and interests of their country, after providing for their families, their adherents and creatures, they divide amongst themselves hundreds of thousands of the money of the most wronged and impoverished nation on earth, in jobs, in pensions, and in sinecure places? Are these the miscreants who passed the convention bill, and disarmed the Irish nation, to secure their usurpations, corruptions and treason? Are these the men who, after indemnifying the most atrocious outrage of the most sacred laws, enacted a code for substituting *lettres de cachet*, the *bastille*, and the galleys, on the ruins of Habeas Corpus, and trial by Jury? Are these the men who have poisoned confidence between man and man, by instituting an infernal system of perjurers, spies and informers? Are these the men that, from a consciousness that their usurpation, corruption and treason could not stand the test of inquiry, destroyed discussion, and assassinated the press? Are these the men who, after exhausting their vindictive invention in framing sanguinary laws,

skulked to the Council to let slip an excited military to wreak their vengeance, with fire and sword, on the IRISH PEOPLE, and, after, skulked to *their House of Commons*, to wind up their automaton delegates, not only to sanction their murders, but to panegyrize them as the Saviours of the Constitution; whilst, in the execution of the sacred trust of legislation, their impostor delegates were so many living proofs that they were its most tyrannic subverters; and the very outrages they sanctioned and applauded were unerring testimony, that to secure their usurpation of the essential rights of the constitution, they had consigned all the rest to the flames, the bayonet, and the dungeon.

In the awful presence of God, and of your Country, I ask you, Irish Citizens, who have sworn to maintain the Constitution in whose defence you have armed, ARE THESE FACTS FOUNDED IN TRUTH? Come forward; shrink not from the question which involves you in disgrace and infamy. Abandon the wretched pretext for silence which has been set up, that, in arming and swearing to defend the constitution, you have forfeited the right of discussion. Sworn to protect it, you are sworn to discuss it, that you may know against whom you are to defend it. In vain shall you set up such a squeamish apology. The ever memorable volunteers, to whom Ireland owes whatever part of the constitution she ever enjoyed, have given you a precedent for blending the duties of
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the soldier with the rights of the citizen. Or, if you prefer the example of those who have destroyed every vestige of the Constitution, you will find it in the late House of Commons, who debated in martial array. You may find it in the printed resolutions of those English Fencibles, who, under the powerful inspiration of additional pay, almost on the day they were landed in your capital, amidst twenty^{two} thousand ~~two~~ starving inhabitants, gave a decided opinion of the *excellence* of the *Irish Constitution*, of the blessings it imparts, and of the zeal with which they meant to support it. You may have a precedent from these Ancient Britons, a haggard crew, issuing from their homes with heads as stupid as their hills are sterile, scarcely poured forth upon our fertile plains, when, smartened into Janizaries, brightened by the conflagration of our houses, and rendered keen by the scent and taste of Irish blood—they have given an opinion of the *excellence* of the *Irish Constitution*.

I do not address myself to those corporations where each finds countenance in the venality of his associates, and insolently glories in his prostitution; rascally Citizens who turn batteries, which had been raised against despotism, on the Liberties of their Country. Nor do I address myself to Jobbers and Contractors, licensed peculators, nor to those political traitors whose patrimony is usurpation,

ation, and whose trade is parricide ; nor to the corrupt men in the law, or in the revenue, who shoot the Gospels from hand to hand, to weave the web of extortion and villany, and scatter it piecemeal with the breath of perjury. But I address myself to those who do not feel that we are a conquered people ; to those who do not acknowledge that foreign mercenaries are exclusively entitled to the sovereign right of Irish Citizens to discuss the Irish Constitution ; to those who are not callous to the stings and anguish of a guilty conscience ; to those who are not insensible to the shame and infamy which attend on public detection of perjury and parricide. Embodied and sworn to defend the Constitution and Liberties of Ireland, you stand charged with supporting TRAITORS, who have usurped the National Representation, and subverted the Constitution. Arraigned and put on your trial, to be silent is to plead guilty to the charge. In vain shall you attempt to evade *condemnation* by the jargon of attachment to loyalty and constitution, with which you have loaded the Newspapers in your stupid address ? In vain shall you attempt to fritter away the charge, by accusing the People of Ireland of having conspired to subvert the Constitution. You must first answer, *has it not been subverted already by the usurpation, corruption and treason of those very men you support ?* Yet, unfounded as is this accusation against the UNITED PEOPLE OF IRELAND, it
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would ill-become me to shrink from the charge, who have exerted myself by every means in my power to promote that UNION, upon which, in my mind, the salvation of my Country depends, and on which I have staked my life, my name, and all that to me is dear upon earth.

DEFENCE
OF
THE UNITED PEOPLE OF IRELAND.

YES! the People of Ireland have united in a GLORIOUS CONSPIRACY to destroy religious bigotry and national thralldom. They have bound themselves by the most solemn engagement, that Religion shall no longer be made the instrument by which the Irish Nation shall be divided, enslaved and debased. They have sworn to annihilate Corruption, Usurpation and Treason, and to regain their constitutional, imprescriptible right of being represented. Here, then, are the Catholics of Ireland, the Dissenters of Ireland, and every Parliamentary Protestant without the pale of Corruption and Bigotry, on the one side, and a few contemptible usurpers of our national representation, principally Lords, their automaton delegates, and a few deluded, bigoted extirpators, backed and supported by the British Minister, on the other side.

side. In the worst of times, let us dare be honest. Let us boldly examine which of these *committed opponents* have destroyed the Constitution and Liberties of Ireland. If the King of Ireland has been dethroned from the hearts and affections of the People of Ireland, let us inquire who has dethroned him. If the Lords have been rendered base, contemptible, and a nuisance, let us inquire *how they have been created*. If the House of Commons has been filled with impostor spurious delegates, let us drag those to punishment who have polluted it with their supposititious abortions.

Whether the United People of Ireland, or the Minister and his Accomplices, have destroyed Monarchy in Ireland ?

It will not be denied that the great Revolution in property and in mind, which I have already explained, has rendered it a most difficult task to support hereditary power.

As long as mankind were immersed in ignorance, superstition and claniship, they were necessitated to submit to hereditary Magistracy, with all its vices *, its evils, its corruptions and tyranny,
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* “ Ambition with idleness, meanness with pride, a desire to enrich themselves without labour, an aversion to truth, flattery, treason, perfidy, the abandonment of all their engagements, a contempt for the duties of the Citizen,
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to avoid that confusion and bloodshed with which, in such a state, every election must have been attended. But, now that the mind, enlightened, and freed from prejudice and feudal dependence, can select the men of the best talents, and the most virtue, to fill the highest offices, without confusion or contest, nought but the most frugal, faithful and able discharge of its functions, could make hereditary Magistracy to be longer endured.

From the lust of power, and impatience of controul, natural to hereditary Magistracy, it is not difficult for a Minister, furcharged with deceit, with cunning, and with the love of domination, highly gifted with eloquence, and supported by factions who live by usurpation and corruption, to persuade a King to grasp at absolute power, and to break down those sacred bonds by which the Constitution has limited the authority with which it invests him. It is easy for such a Minister, with such accomplices, to persuade a King, that the temporary expedients which may answer the ephemeral interests of those insects who pass in continual succession about a throne, are equally advantageous to hereditary Magistracy, which aims at being immortal. How shall a King,

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a dread of the Magistrate's virtue, Hope from his vices, and more than all the perpetual ridicule of Virtue." Montesquieu's Spirit of Laws. " These are the vices which," this Sage says, " have, in all places, and at all times, characterized Courts."

whose education and office debars him from having a friend, find a man honest enough to tell him, that those measures which are absolutely necessary to maintain ignorant, profligate Ministers in office, are as destructive of his hereditary Kingship? Where shall he find a friend who will remind him, that the Stuarts have been led to the block, and driven to exile, by making antiquated precedents and despotic counsels the rule of their conduct, and by disregarding that existing, living mind, whose state of knowledge and independence should be the guide of the Magistrate's duty? True, the Minister, and his accomplices, are loudest in trumpeting their loyalty to Monarchy. But what sort of Monarchy is it? A Ministerial monster which devours millions of human victims: A monster which squanders hundreds of millions of national wealth: A monster which bears down the interest, the reason, the liberties and the happiness of mankind, by corruption and military force. Is it not a fact, that, instead of that Monarchy which the Constitution invests with the execution of the laws, and with the power of merely accepting or rejecting them at their formation, the Minister and his accomplices have converted the Monarchy into a Ministerial Despotism, with powers so enormous, that, at its mandate, the most sanguinary, tyrannical laws are sure to be passed, the violation of all laws is sure

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to find an indemnification, and laws the most wholesome, without its concurrence, are as surely rejected? After the whole power of the Monarchy of Ireland, in the Minister's hands, has been employed for the purposes of the basest intrigues, in dividing and buying the factions in England to support his tottering power—after he has alienated the affection and confidence of the Irish people for Monarchy, by thus wantonly sporting with their feelings; at one moment raising their hopes, and blasting them after to answer his personal views—which are the betrayers of Monarchy, the United People of Ireland who have passively suffered these insults and injuries, or the Minister who has dared to inflict them? Had it been within the scope of physical possibility to uphold hereditary Kingship, I ask, which was most likely to support it---the Minister, who has placed it above all controul, by an overwhelming corruption which has ended in bankruptcy, by the most sanguinary tyrannical laws, and by military power; or, the United People of Ireland, who demand that its power shall be limited by the firm establishment of a frugal, a faithful and perfect Representation of the WHOLE IRISH PEOPLE?

Whether the United People of Ireland, or the Minister and his accomplices, have destroyed the Peerage as a Branch of the Legislature?

If this great revolution in property and mind, to which I have often alluded, has rendered it difficult to maintain hereditary kingship, it has not rendered it less difficult to uphold hereditary lordship. Yet it will be found that the Minister has done as much to destroy the latter as I have proved he has done to destroy the former. He has created Englishmen peers of Ireland, without property, connection, residence, or any one constitutional qualification. He has driven the Irish Peers of the best property out of the country, to avoid insignificance and mortification, from his having attached all consequence arising from patronage or interest, to the borough-mongering lords of his making. Has he not reduced the attendant lords nearly to peers of his own creation, whose sole or principal property consists in their proprietorship of their impostor delegates, which they sell for clerkships in the revenue, clerkships in the post-office, clerkships in the law offices, and a thousand sinecure places, as emblematic of their beggary and meanness as of their venality and prostitution? Has he not set up the Irish Peerage to auction where disgrace and infamy could be the sole bidders for honours which only could suit them, and
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was it not paid for in the base coin of counterfeit representation? Has he not converted the Irish peerage into jugglers, who pull the wires of the puppets they have stuffed, decked and bedizened with the goods they have robbed from the Nation? I ask, then, which has destroyed the Constitutional Peerage, as far as its destruction was in the power of either—the Minister, who has created Lords who can exist no longer than they are suffered to usurp the inalienable, constitutional right of the people to representation—or the People, who, by reclaiming this inalienable, constitutional right, reduce these Lords to that nullity from which the Minister raised them?

Whether the Separation of Ireland from Britain has been occasioned by the Minister and his accomplices, or by the United People of Ireland?

THE connection between nation and nation is cemented and strengthened by its being placed on the basis of justice and reciprocal benefit. It is a bond founded on interest; and when that is violated, all bond of connection is broken. If I have clearly demonstrated that the Minister and his accomplices have transferred every means which the People of Ireland possessed of acquiring national wealth to enrich the People of Britain—if I have shewn that, to pay the infamous traitors who have made the surrender, he

he has abandoned the pittance their industry gathers, under its mutilated means, to speculation, corruption and plunder—and if, to support this unparalleled outrage of national justice, he has employed Britons in massacring, in burning, in torturing the Irish—which have torn the bonds of alliance asunder, the fiends who have violated every law of our nature, or the United People of Ireland, who have been betrayed, plundered, and butchered?

As long as the Protestants would be tyrants over their Catholic Countrymen, who were triple their number, they were at the mercy of England's protection. As long as this detestable tyranny was in existence, no demand of Great Britain, however unjust, could be disputed. But, now that the Protestants have abandoned this ruinous parricide; now that they are sensible of the folly and wickedness of sacrificing their national rights for the gratification of the most horrible passion; now that they have united with their Catholic Countrymen in demanding those rights they once so basely relinquished—with a population of more than four millions, and eight hundred thousand able to bear arms; in one of the strongest countries of Europe by nature, and still stronger by art, where every field is a fortification, and every acre may be disputed; they disclaim all protection which is to be purchased at the expence of their national rights and their national honour.

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They feel that Ireland is as independent of Britain as Britain is independent of her. They are sensible that every connection between free and independent nations should be of its own nature a voluntary act; and they know that connections which are not voluntary, are chains which the tyrant throws over the slave he has conquered, chains which Ireland, indignant, throws off; and, to the last man, Irishmen will die sooner than wear them. Instead of a connection where every thing is surrendered on their part, and every thing is withheld on the part of Great Britain, the people of Ireland demand that strict justice and reciprocal benefit shall be the bond of alliance. Contrast this manly assertion of their national rights with the jargon of traitors, who cry up the weakness of Ireland, and decry her strength; asserting, with the glorious example of American freedom full in their teeth, that if we are not a province to England we must be a province to France. Contrast this with the language of miscreants who have dared to assert, that the most traitorous sacrifice of the produce of our agriculture to non-resident landlords without a return, of our markets, our manufactures, our home trade, our foreign trade—even our very name as a nation, was not too much to insure them the support of Great Britain, to perpetuate their usurpation and plunder. Had the Minister one ray of a Statesman's conception, instead of attempting to main-
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tain such an unjust and unequal connection by supporting such an infamous faction, from the instant that he had seen the Protestants of Ireland abandon their tyrannic bigotry, and unite with their Catholic countrymen in the glorious cause of regaining their national rights, he would have seen the necessity of yielding a prompt and gracious concession of what he could no longer withhold.

The only Charge which remains to be answered of those which have been made against the United People of Ireland, is, their having resolved to create a Republic.

When an argument turns on the meaning of terms, they should be strictly defined; for names and indefinite terms are the great engines by which the knaves impose on the fools of the world. Had the Chief Executive Magistrate in our Constitution been called a Stadtholder, with ten times more power than the Constitution allots him, our Government would be called a Republic. I might quote the Author of the Spirit of Laws to prove that our constitution is a republic. But, respectable as is his authority, I prefer appealing to definition and facts. Then, taking that to be a republic where the *public affairs* are controuled by the bulk of the people; what was there in Greece or in Rome more truly republican than that every householder, as was formerly, or that every man possessed

possessed of so small a property as forty shillings freehold a year, as is the supposed right at present, should exercise, by his delegate, invested with the sole power over the national purse, an entire controul over every act of the executive power? What was there more truly republican in Greece or in Rome than that the people should be bound only by laws of their delegates' making? What was there more truly republican in Greece or in Rome than that the whole constituted authorities, legislative, executive and judicial, should be equally bound by the laws as the poorest man in the nation? What was there more truly republican in any republic that ever existed, than that a hair of the most insignificant citizen's head shall not be injured, unless he had been found guilty of having transgressed the law by the unanimous judgment of twelve of his neighbours taken from the mass of the people? Who will contend that Rome, half freemen, half slaves, or that Greece, half citizens, half helots, were equally republican as our constitution, which ordains that the slave shall be free the instant he sets his foot on our soil? Is our constitution less a republic because our democracy acts by representation? Is democracy less powerful or less secured from being imposed on, if, with the organization of Alfred, and the frequent elections of primitive parliaments, it was to exercise the right of selecting whatever talents

and virtue were to be found in the nation, than if it were to act as a mob? If the Peers were restrained within those bounds which the constitution allots them, would they be less restricted than the Patricians or Senate of Rome? If the Executive Magistrate were limited to those powers which the constitution has sanctioned, would our liberties have more to dread from what we call a King, than the liberties of Rome had to fear from what the Romans called a Consul? It is not to Monarchy we are indebted for the freedom our constitution contains: the nations of Europe had Monarchs, but the people were slaves. It is not to the Nobles we are indebted for the freedom our constitution contains: the nations of Europe had Nobles, yet the people were slaves. It is to what every people that ever existed owed their freedom that we must be indebted for our's. It is to OURSELVES that we must be indebted for whatever freedom we have, or shall ever possess. No wonder the Minister and his accomplices, who have destroyed the republic, should charge the United People of Ireland of conspiring ITS RESTORATION. Waving, for a moment, the imprescriptible right of the nation to set aside institutions, however ancient, which in the revolution of human affairs have been rendered injurious, and of creating institutions which the revolution in human affairs has rendered imperiously

periously necessary, but making the constitution the standard to judge by—I ask, is that the constitutional Monarchy which is subject to no controul but that of a proprietary representation, which it can purchase with an overwhelming corruption? Is that a constitutional Peerage which exists but by its proprietorship and sale of the national representation? Is that a constitutional Representation which is sold by the Lords and bought by the Crown? If so, our constitution is but a name; and we may label the Lion, the Tygers and Jackalls, with King, Lords and Commons, and, prostrating ourselves at their dens, besmeared with the blood and blanched with the bones of our fellows, hold out our necks to be slaughtered. They must be more than Bœotians, who change the names when they destroy the essence of liberty. Shall those who destroy the constitution as King, Lords and Commons, find sanction for crime in their titles? Names go for nothing when the constitution is the stake to be fought for. It is this which not only *justifies* resistance, but makes it an absolute duty. On this head, the late Camden has spoken out boldly: “ King, Lords and Commons, are grand and
 “ sounding names; but King, Lords and Com-
 “ mons, may become tyrants as well as others.
 “ Tyranny in one or more is the same.—
 “ It is as lawful to resist the tyranny of *many* as
 “ of *one*. This has been a doctrine known and

“ acted on for ages. * When the famous Selden
 “ was asked by what statute resistance to tyranny
 “ could

* I quote the following from the works of Dr. John Ponet, Bishop of Rochester, and afterwards of Winchester, to shew that, on the authority of a Bishop, this is not a Doctrine new to the Constitution.

“ Kinges, Princes and Governours have their autoritie of the people, as all lawes, usages and policies doo declare and testifie.

“ For in some places and countries they have more and greater autoritie, in some places lesse. And in some the people have not given this autoritie to any other, but reteine and exercise it themselves. And is any man so unreasonable to denie, that the hole maie doo as much as they have permitted one member to doo? or those that have appointed an office upon trust, have not autoritie upon juste occasion (as the abuse of it) to take awaie that they gave? All lawes doo agree that men maie revoke their proxies and lettres of Attournaie, *whan it pleaseth them*, much more *whan they see their proctours and Attournaies abuse it.*

“ But now to prove the latter part of this question affirmatively, that it is lawfull to kill a tiranne: ther is no man can denie, but that the Ethnikes (albeit they had not the right and perfite true knowlage of God) were endued with the knowlage of the lawe of nature.

“ For it is no private lawe to a fewe or certain people, but common to all: not written in bokes, but graffed in the heartes of men: not made by man, but ordained of God: which we have not learned received or redde, but have taken, sucked, and drawned out of nature: whereunto we are not taught, but made: not instructed, but seasoned: and (as St. Paule saith) mannes conscience bearing witnesse of it.

“ This lawe testifieth to every mannes conscience, that it is naturall to cutte awaie an incurable membre, which (being suffred) wolde destroy the hole body.

“ Kinges, Princes and other Governours, albeit they are the headdes of a politike body, yet they are not the hole body. And though they be the chief membres, yet they are but membres: *not her are the people ordained for them, but they are ordained for the people.*

“ Upon this law of nature, and to conserve the hole body the Ethnikes thought it reasonable, and made it lawfull, by their positive lawe, for every man to kill a tiranne. And to encourage men to entreprise to kill a
 tiranne,

“ could be justified, his reply was, ‘ It was to be
 “ justified by the custom of England, which is
 “ part

tiranne, they esteemed the dede to be worthy so great rewarde, that they thought him worthy pardone that killed a tiranne, though he had killed his owne naturall father before. And besides this, whan they sawe, that tirannes used to have their bodies defended with great garisones and gardes of forain people, or kept themselves in strongholdes and secret chambres, so as none without great hasarde and peril might come neare them: they propounded great rewardes to him that should destroe a tiranne. Nother thought they rewardes or giftes to be a sufficient recompence for so vertuous an acte, but they used also to make the image of him that killed a tiranne in brasse: and to set it up in the most solemne place of the citie, for a perpetual memorie of the acte, the commendation of the doer, and the encouragement of others to doe the like. They dedicated to his praise and honour songes and verses, and wolde have them taken of men as Goddes worthy immortalitie.

“ Whereof came the name of Nobilitie, or how were those that be called heroical or noble personages divided from others, and had in suche honour and reverence, seing all men came of one man and one woman? Was it for their lustie hawking and hunting? for their nimble diceing and conning carding? for their fine singing and daunceing; for their open bragging and swearing? for their false fltering and flattering? for their subtil piking and stealing? for their cruel polling and pilling? for their merciless man murthering? for their unnatural destroieng of their natural countrymen, and traiterous betraieng of their countrey? No, no, ther was no suche thing. The respect only of their vertue and love to their countrey brought them therto. Because they revenged and delivered the oppressed People out of the handes of their governours, who abused their autoritie, and wickedly, cruelly and tyrannously ruled over them: the People of a grate and thankfull minde gave them that estimacion and honour. Of this kind of Nobilitie was Hercules, Theseus and such like.”

In answer to the question, “ Why Christen men never made expresse positive lawe of the kinde of punishment of tirannes,” he says :

“ But I beseche thee, what nedeth to make one general law to punishe bi one name a great many offenses, when the lawe is allready made for the punishment of everi one of them particularly. If a prince robbe and spoile his subjectes, it is thefte, and as a thefe he
 ought

“ part of the law of the land.’ And I will
 “ affirm, my Lords, not only as a Statesman,
 “ Politician and Philosopher, but as a Common
 “ Lawyer, that whenever oppression begins, re-
 “ sistance becomes lawful and right.” Has not
 oppression begun? Has not resistance become
 lawful and right? Has not the most sacred, im-
 prescriptible and constitutional right of Represen-
 tation been usurped, bought and sold? Is this
 no oppression? Have not your markets, your
 home trade, your foreign trade, your agricultural
 produce, been sacrificed by corruption and trea-
 son? and is this no oppression? Are not the
 People of Ireland robbed of every means their
 Country furnishes of acquiring national wealth;
 and are they not rapaciously plundered of the
 little their industry gathers, to pay for the treason
 that robs them? ARE THESE NO OPPRESSION?
 Have not laws * been created, by which the first
 principles of Christianity, and the purest morality,
 are punished with death? Is this no oppression?
 Are years in the dungeon † without charge or
 trial,

ought to be punished. If he kill and murder them contrary or with-
 out the lawes of his countrey, it is murder, and as a murderour he
 ought to be punished. If he go about to betray his countrey, and to
 bring the people under a foreign power: he is a traitour, and as a
 traitour he ought to suffer.”

* Called the Insurrection Acts.

† Neilson, Haslet, Russel, and many others, all men of
 the most exemplary characters, are now in the seventeenth
 month of close imprisonment without any charge, during
 which

trial—are the lingering and painful deaths of the
 baſtille or the gallows, upon the oath of one man,
 who muſt acknowledge his perjury before he can be
 an evidence, no oppreſſion? Is lawleſs, indifcri-
 minate maſſacre—is burning of houſes and pro-
 perty—is the torture to extort confeſſion—ARE
 THESE NO OPPRESSION? If to deny that RESIST-
 ANCE becomes lawful and right when OPPRESSION
 begins—if to deny that to call in FOREIGN AID
 becomes lawful and right when OPPRESSION be-
 gins, is to ſap the foundation on which the throne
 has been placed, and to annul every act ſince the
 depoſition of Stuart—is *oppreſſion* a word without
 meaning? or, where ſhall we look for its true
 definition? I will take it from the works of
 John Locke, who wrote by expreſs deſire of
 James's ſucceſſor. His writings received the ap-
 probation of the Legiſlature, and of the ſound
 part of the nation who made the Revolution:
 and they have been ever ſince acknowledged, on
 all ſides, to contain the true principles of our
 conſtitutional code. His words are,* “ Though,
 “ in

which time, their health is gone, their fortunes ruined;
 though when imprifoned they were moſt of them men in
 conſiderable buſineſs, making rapid fortunes: but their
 real *crime* is, they were Proprietors of that Patriotic Print,
 the Northern Star, of beloved memory. The property in
 this Paper alone was worth 5000l. at the time it was de-
 ſtroyed by the preſent Deſpotiſm.

* Locke on Civil Government, Chap. xiii. § 149.

“ in a constituted commonwealth, standing upon
 “ its own basis, and acting according to its own
 “ nature, that is, acting for the preservation of
 “ the community, there can be but one su-
 “ preme power, which is the Legislative, to
 “ which all the rest are and must be subordi-
 “ nate; yet the Legislative being only a FI-
 “ DUCIARY POWER to act for *certain* ends---
 “ there remains still *in the people* a SUPREME
 “ POWER *to remove or alter the legislative*, when
 “ they find the legislative *act contrary to the trust*
 “ *reposed in them*: for all power given with trust
 “ for the attaining an end, being limited by that
 “ end, whenever that end is manifestly neglected
 “ or opposed, THE TRUST MUST NECESSARILY
 “ BE FORFEITED, and the power devolve into the
 “ hands of those that gave it, *who may place it*
 “ *anew* where they shall think best for their
 “ safety and security. And thus the community
 “ perpetually *retains a supreme power* of saving
 “ themselves from the attempts and designs of
 “ any body, EVEN OF THEIR LEGISLATORS, when-
 “ ever they shall be so *foolish*, or so *wicked*, as to
 “ lay and carry on designs against the *liberties* and
 “ *properties* of the subject.” And that no doubt
 should remain of what these designs against the li-
 berties and properties of the subject, by which the
 trust is forfeited, means, he defines them: * “ *He*
acts

* Chap. xix. § 222.

“ *acts contrary to his trust* when he either employs
 “ *the force, treasure, and offices* of the society, to
 “ CORRUPT the REPRESENTATIVES, and *gain them to*
 “ *his purposes.*” “ What is this but to *cut up the*
 “ *government by the roots, and poison the very foun-*
 “ *tain of public security?* for the People, having
 “ reserved to themselves the choice of their re-
 “ presentatives, as the fence to their properties
 “ (and, he should have added, their liberties),
 “ could do it for no other end, but that they
 “ might always be freely chosen, and, so chosen,
 “ freely act and advise, as the necessity of the com-
 “ monwealth and the public good should, upon
 “ examination and mature debate, be judged to
 “ require. This those who give their votes *be-*
 “ *fore they hear the debate,* and have weighed the
 “ reasons on all sides, *are not capable of doing.* To
 “ prepare such an assembly as *this,* and endeavour
 “ to *set up the declared abettors of his own will* for
 “ the TRUE REPRESENTATIVES of the People and
 “ the *lawmakers* of the society, is certainly *as great*
 “ *a breach of trust,* and as *perfect a declaration of a*
 “ *design to subvert the government,* as is POSSIBLE TO
 “ BE MET WITH. To which if one shall add *re-*
 “ *wards and punishments visibly employed to the same*
 “ *end,* and all the arts of *perverted law* made
 “ use of to *take off and destroy all that stand in the*
 “ *way of such a design,* and will not comply and
 “ consent to betray the liberties of their country,
 “ it will be past doubt *what is doing.* What power
 Y “ they

“ they ought to have in the society, who *thus*
 “ employ it *contrary to the trust* which went along
 “ with it in its first institution, is easy to deter-
 “ mine; and one cannot but see, that he who
 “ has once attempted any such thing as this,
 “ *cannot any longer be trusted.*” “ * The People
 “ have no other remedy in this, as in all other
 “ cases where they have no *judge on earth*, than an
 “ *appeal to Heaven.*” And, as if he had foreseen
 that tyranny and judicial villany would attempt to
 convert truth and justice into libel, sedition, re-
 bellion and treason, he says, “ † If they who say
 “ that this hypothesis lays a foundation for rebel-
 “ lion, mean that it may occasion civil wars or
 “ intestine broils, to tell the people they are ab-
 “ solved from obedience when illegal attempts are
 “ made upon their liberties or properties—they
 “ may as well say, upon the same ground, that ho-
 “ nest men may not oppose robbers or pirates, be-
 “ cause this may occasion disorder or bloodshed.”
 “ I desire it may be considered, what kind of a
 “ peace there will be in the world, which is to be
 “ maintained only for the benefit of robbers and
 “ oppressors.” “ Polyphemus’s den gives us a
 “ perfect pattern of such a peace, and such a
 “ government, wherein Ulysses and his compa-
 “ nions had nothing to do but quietly to suffer
 “ themselves to be devoured.”

If

* Chap. xiv. § 168.

† Chap. xix. § 228.

If this champion of these revolutionary principles upon which alone the present government has any claim to its powers, has expressly declared, that corrupting the representation is that crime which defines where oppression begins, where the trust is forfeited, and where an appeal to Heaven is justified—shall the usurpation of that representation, and thousands of the most atrocious outrages and tyrannies by which it is supported, act as minus quantities, by which those who exercise the executive and legislative shall stand acquitted of the punishment due to corrupting the national representatives only? If a law of their own making shall indemnify tyranny, what tyrant can ever be punished? But what power on earth shall dare to make laws to condemn a whole people? If I am asked to define what I mean by the People, I answer, that decided majority which leaves no doubt of its title. And if I am asked what I mean by the tyrant, I answer, *look to his deeds*. But in Ireland they cannot be mistaken. If a decided majority of the people have not united against usurpation, corruption and tyranny, the whole force of Irish Government, and the whole force of Great Britain, would have been more than sufficient long since to subdue them; and if any less than the People have united, necessity could not have been set up to justify the system of tyranny, massacre and torture which has been adopted. Away with the charge of a whole people rebelling! The minor part are

the rebels: a decided majority can never rebel: usurpers and tyrants only can commit rebellion. If not, what are the liberties of Europe but rebellion? What are the liberties of Switzerland but rebellion against the tyranny of Austria formerly, and against their own petty tyrants at present? What are the liberties of Holland but rebellion, aided by foreign assistance, against the bigotry and tyranny of Spain formerly, and against a Stadtholder now? What are the liberties of England but rebellion, aided by foreign assistance, against the bigotry and tyranny of Stuart? What are the liberties of America but rebellion, aided by France, against the tyranny of Britain? And what are the liberties of France but rebellion against the despotism of the Capets, and against the tyranny of every other despot in Europe? Although the annals of mankind afford no instance of tyrants restoring the liberties they had usurped as long as they had power to hold them, or of a people regaining their freedom *but by this sort of rebellion*, I know such historical facts are ill relished by what are called MODERATE MEN.

As this is a title which the selfish and dastards assume, to excuse their abandonment of the liberties of their country at this extraordinary crisis, we should examine their claim to so honourable an appellation.

That moderation in indulging the appetite is the guard against debauchery and gluttony, which debase and brutalize man—that moderation in the enjoy-

enjoyment of the sex is the guard against debility of body and mind—that moderation in our expences lays the only foundation for generosity, independence and charity—in a word, that moderation is the basis of virtue and magnanimity, I most freely subscribe to. But what has this moderation to do with the moderation with which we adopt the principles of political science? If it cannot be denied that politics * are governed by principles as fixed as any other science whatever---if the history of human society furnishes uniform testimony that monopoly of property creates monopoly of power, that monopoly of power occasions the abuse of it---if these principles are as fixed and invariable in politics, as that lead descends by the principle of gravitation, or that by the principles of mathematics the angles of a triangle are equal to two right angles, ---how does the term moderation apply to the adoption of principles in one science, any more than in the other? If it is the height of absurdity to speak of a moderate mathematician, or to boast of the moderation with which one comprehends and applies the principles of mathematics, is it less absurd to make a merit of the moderation with which one adopts the principles of political science? Examine these moderate politicians; you will

* When I speak of politics, I mean that first of all sciences which consists in framing laws according to the fixed principles of human nature; all else is faction; and in a contest between party and party, the more moderate they are, the less mischievous.

will find that they are men who draw a circle round every monopoly, abuse, and privilege, in which they themselves are concerned; but that, with wonderful liberality, they will readily abandon every other to reformation. They are men that, while power is in other hands than their own, can see no salvation but in an alteration of system; but the instant they are in office themselves, they display their moderation in leaving the system untouched. They are men who have made themselves slaves to the meanest and most contemptible wants, desires and habits; miserable, if their bed is too hard or too soft, their pillow too high or too low, their dinner too much done or too little, regardless of how many millions corruption and tyranny have left without beds to lye on, or food to allay the gnawings of ravenous famine. They are men in whom the feelings of sympathy, that happy corrective of selfishness, is wholly extinct; that sympathy which, forgetting the individual being, throws fortune and life into the common flock of suffering humanity, and gloriously ventures his all in the cause of his fellows. To this your moderate man is wholly a stranger. He wraps himself up in the mantle of egotism, and, taking his post on that neutral state where Solon so justly has placed the most criminal point, he plumes himself on seeing so many lower in the depths of corruption, but forgets the millions above him on the summit of virtue; and whilst he boasts
that

that he has not as many vices as others, he stands convicted of the greatest of any, the not having one single virtue.

CONCLUSION.

If I have succeeded in demonstrating that self-interest is the governing principle in politics, as well as of all human action ; that we are the creatures of our wants and desires ; that those who possess the means of satisfying those wants and desires, must possess the means of influencing the actions, and commanding the services of mankind ; that those who possess property are possessed of those means, and that those laws* which monopolize property invest a few with the power of dictating to

* Was it not that the Minister and his accomplices have exerted themselves with such violence to destroy the present connection between the two Countries as to leave no doubt of their success, I should have shewn, that in addition to the reasons I have already advanced to prove the necessity of abolishing the laws of primogeniture, entails and settlements, there were reasons which rendered it peculiarly expedient in Ireland, first, that it was the best means of bringing the absentees home, and next, that, as the abolition of these laws was the only means of securing the independence and fidelity of Representatives, it was peculiarly incumbent on Ireland to adopt it, from her Legislature having to guard not only against the corruption incident to all Legislatures, but to guard against the corruption which so powerful a nation as Great Britain ever has, and ever will employ to bribe the Irish Legislature to sell the Rights of Ireland.

to the many, which is invariably abused, and a necessity on the part of the many of yielding to such a dictation; I trust I have impressed on the minds of my countrymen, that all Reform which would leave the monopoly of property untouched, must prove insufficient, and that the only reformation by which their liberties can be secured is that which destroys the dependence, and establishes the independence, of the WHOLE CONSTITUENT BODY. I trust I have convinced them, that the independence of the Constituent Body is the guardian of liberty, and not the discretion or virtue of those they elect; and that the abolition of all laws for the monopoly of property is the sole means by which it can be established. Liberty cannot stand but on the broad, firm and perfect basis of Universal Representation. Be the superstructure what it may, if you will have Liberty, you must first establish this foundation for it to rest on; and that you may have this perfect representative basis, you must look to the constituent People of whom it is formed; you must abolish all monopolies, which otherwise would destroy your independence. Thus you will reform YOURSELVES; *this is the true Reformation*. Having once re-established your liberties on the basis of perfect representation, which is the basis of your constitution, you will bring to the test what parts of the constitution can stand, and what parts the great revolution in property and in mind has excluded.

If

If hereditary powers are compatible with a perfect representation in the present state of the European world, they will stand; if not, if they cannot exist but at the expence of the Constitution and Liberty of the People, they must go to destruction. Be that as it may, DO YOUR PART; and trust me, my fellow-citizens, that when you have established a perfect representation, it will purify every other part of your constitution. Whatever is corrupt, it will destroy; and whatever defects it cannot correct, will be but as spots on the disk of the sun, which will not obscure its lustre, nor prevent it from diffusing heat and light equally to all descriptions who live under its sphere. If the hereditary powers have been hurled from their own places in the constitution by the vast revolution in property and in mind which the inventions of the Compass and the Press have occasioned, what right have they to seize upon your part, or to imagine that you will tamely resign it? If the history of the constitution bears testimony in every page, that the liberty it contains was created by the representative part—nay, if the last hundred years afford undeniable proof that the system of corruption and of proprietorship of the National Representation is a suicide, and that the last five years stamp the guilt on the Minister and his accomplices of having forestalled the blow—you must be convinced, that to abandon your part of the constitution, would be to abandon the whole constitution to utter destruction. Be but true to

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your-

yourself, and you need not look out of the constitution for the most perfect liberty Man can possess. Examine the constitutions which have been adopted in America, in France, and in Italy, and you will see that they have been taken from your's; you will find that they have selected those parts which are compatible with this great revolution of Europe, and that they have rejected those parts which the great revolution has rendered incapable of being supported. Are not Representative Democracy, with its organizations and frequent elections, and the Trial by Jury, the life and soul of their constitutions? and are they not so, also, of your's? The glorious pre-eminence of having preserved the principles of Liberty, when they were extinct in all other nations, belongs to your constitution, and should not be abandoned. Let us not depreciate the whole constitution, because time, and the wickedness and folly of men, have destroyed some of its parts; but let us ever remember that it has been the depository of the sacred embers of Liberty, that sacred fire which was taken to the woods of America, and transported from thence into France, to illuminate the rest of the world.

The Minister and his accomplices will tell you that I am exciting you to revolution. I answer, the revolution has been made already by the inflexible progress and order of human nature. They will tell you that they are endeavouring to save you from the horrors of revolution. I answer, there

there is nothing horrible in the revolution; it is the means which have been employed to obstruct and retard it which have caused all the horrors. Compare the revolution with the means which have been adopted to stop it, and you will see where the horrors have come from. Behold how the invention of the Mariner's Compass has encouraged the industry of nations, by enabling the most distant to exchange their surplus produce, one with the other. See how the same quantity of labour produces so much more of the necessaries and conveniences of life now, than before those machines and engines for the abridgement of labour were known, or the present vast division of labour had been established. See what numerous ingenious classes have been introduced into society, and how the condition of the ancient classes has been improved. Behold the invention of the Press, by which so much knowledge has been diffused and perpetuated; that happy invention by which the soul of Genius is infused into millions with such rapturous delight. These are the materials which compose this vast revolution; but where are its horrors? For these you must look to the means which the Minister and his accomplices have employed to arrest it. Is there one of the blessings this great revolution has conferred on mankind that they have not blasted? Look to the war they have engaged in, with all its destruction and horrors: Look to the European blood they have shed, and to the European wealth

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they

they have lavished : Look to the massacres, the forgery, the civil discord and famine, they have paid such sums for exciting : Look to the corruption, the bankruptcy, and requisitions, of which they have been the agents and authors : Look to the horrid catalogue of murders, of burnings, of dungeons, of tortures, together with the thousand persecutions and tyrannies they have employed, against persons, opinions, and property : And, to crown all, behold them reducing the industrious to beggary and famine, by squandering the sacred fund which once furnished their wages ; and enlisting the part they had ruined, they have employed them to subdue the entire. Contrast this revolution with those means which have been employed to oppose it : you will see the incalculable blessings which have arisen from commerce, from industry, and from increased knowledge, on one side ; and the innumerable curses which arise from corruption, usurpation and tyranny, on the other ; you will see all those advantages which lead to the perfection, the independence and freedom of mankind, on one side ; you will see the most diabolical means exerted at every point, and in every direction, to corrupt, to enslave and debase mankind, on the other. When the Minister and his accomplices talk of the horrors of revolution, let them come forward and clear themselves of all those horrors in France which I have traced to their doors : Let them clear themselves of those
hor-

horrors our Country has witnessed from one end to the other: Let them tell you what horrors can be greater than those they have acted.

Beloved Countrymen! be not disheartened.—Look back on the course these tyrants have run. You have beheld the organized armies of despotism advance against France; and you have seen them annihilated by the disorganized armies of Liberty, whilst massacre, and discord, and famine, and treason, tore at her vitals. Victorious or vanquished, Liberty glides with the tide which has set in in her favour: victorious or vanquished, Despotism cannot make head against the torrent which has set in against her.

That with an empty exchequer, exhausted resources, and a tornado ready to burst on their heads, the gentry of Ireland should have set the example of lawless atrocities—that with palaces compared to the huts they destroyed, they should apply the torch to the hovel---that with wives, daughters and infants, they should tear away thousands of fathers without trial or charge, and abandon their helpless innocents to beggary, brutality and famine---that with feelings to suffer, with lives to lose, and property to forfeit, they should halloo an excited military to torture and murder their fellow-citizens—spring from motives, I thank God, I have neither head nor heart to conceive. But let me conjure you, my brave Countrymen, who have stood between despotism
and

and the liberties of your country, that you will stand between the transports of national fury and national honour. I conjure you to bear in mind that our Women, deprived of political rights, can have no political crimes to account for; that the noblest privilege of Man is to be their protector, and the last act of human depravity is to oppress them. On this head a gallant nation needs no admonitions: you will put down your oppressors without disgracing yourselves; and you will set up the liberties of your country in a manner that shall cover you with glory. Measure not your vengeance by the crimes of the guilty, but measure it by what is becoming of those who inflict it. Rob not Justice of her triumph; but, seated in all the majesty of Order, and in all the loveliness of Mercy, let her punish where she must—let her save where she can!

ARTHUR O'CONNOR.

February 1, 1798.

O'Connor, Arthur,

State of Ireland

[Dublin] [1798]

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